

तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय

SANTINIKETAN  
VISWA BHARATI  
LIBRARY

2387

V 44









# **IN THE SIKH SANCTUARY**

*By the Same Author*

INDIA ARISEN

INDIA IN CHAINS

SRI KRISHNA •

KRISHNA'S FLUTE

THE GOSPEL OF FREEDOM

THE SPIRIT AND STRUGGLE of  
ISLAM

MY MOTHERLAND

THE SECRET OF ASIA

APOSTLES OF FREEDOM

THE ARYAN IDEAL

*Ready Shortly*

CREATIVE REVOLUTION

BUILDERS OF TO-MORROW

# IN THE SIKH SANCTUARY

BY

Prof. T. L. VASWANI

Re. 1-8

GANESH & CO., MADRAS

1922

**Standard Press, Madras**

## RIGHT IS MIGHT

*Eternal God, thou art our shield,  
The dagger, knife, the sword we wield !  
To us protection thou hast given,  
The timeless, deathless Lord of Heaven ;  
To us all, steel's unvanquished might ;  
To us all, times, resistless flight ;  
But chiefly thou protector brave  
All steel, wilt, thine own servants save.*



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Indroduction . . . .	.. 13
The Message of the Gurus . . . .	.. 15
The Guru and His Gospel . . . .	.. 29
A Prophet of Freedom . . . .	.. 29
Sukhmani or Piece-chant . . . .	.. 36
The Meaning of Knowledge . . . .	.. 47
The Seed that Grows . . . .	.. 53
The Secret of National Greatness . . . .	.. 57
Who are the Patriots . . . .	.. 62
The Vision Universal . . . .	.. 67
The Sikh Type . . . .	.. 73
Sikhism and Swaraj . . . .	.. 81



## IN THE SIKH SANCTUARY

### INTRODUCTION

What right have I to speak of the Gurus and their Message ? I am not a Sikh by birth or faith. Yet I am a disciple of the Gurus. The spirit of all Religions is one ; one the Inspiration of all scriptures, and one the adorable Mystery made manifest in the lives of the world's great ones. And the Sikh Gurus are not the monopoly of Sikhism. They belong to all--to East and West--even as the truth and light and love of God belong to the whole universe. They have a world-message. Years ago on my way to Europe, I halted at Aden ; and I saw in that far-off place a quiet little temple where people met reverently to open and read the wondrous words of the Wisdom sung in the Sikh Scriptures. I have addressed Hindu and Muslim audiences on the message of the Gurus. I have spoken of Guru Nanak and the Sikh scriptures in Christian churches in England and Wales. I have seen many visibly moved by the Sikh message. The message comes from the great World-Heart ; therefore, as it seems to me, it moves men and women of different faiths. I sent to a devout Christian lady in England a copy of my address on the "Gospel of

Guru Nanak". She wrote to me that she felt much drawn to the Guru and she asked for a copy of his portrait. I had a letter from another English lady offering her help in spreading the message of the Gurus. Yet I have heard some of my countrymen speak with scant respect of the *Granth Sahib* and the great Gurus. One evening I stood on the deck of the vessel which was bringing me back to India. A courteous, educated young Indian greeted me. In the course of a conversation I happened to refer to the greatness of the Sikh scriptures. What was my surprise to find that this good, intelligent young man thought James Allen's books were superior to the Sikh scriptures! I must not blame this young man. I must blame ourselves and our system of education. Indian boys study English books. Let them. I believe in the value of Western science and literature. But the tragedy of the situation is that young men remain ignorant of the wealth of wisdom in the scriptures of the East. It is this 'educated' ignorance which makes me sad.

One of the Sikh scriptures is a little book named "Sukhmani". I have loved it from the beginning of my days. It is, I think, about two thousand lines in verse. It is worth its weight in gold. The word Sukhmani rendered in free English means, "Mind-Console". May I call it "Peace-Chant"? As a child I heard it chanted by my mother and grandmother. As a boy I learned to chant it myself, and portions of it--sometimes the whole of it--I recited almost every

## INTRODUCTION

3

day before attending my morning school. I meditated upon it in my college days. With the "Gita", the "Upanishads", the "Vedanta Sutras" and the "Bible" I carried it with me on my pilgrimage to Europe twelve years ago. I spoke of its message to Christian audiences. I chanted it as I sat up night after night by the death-bed of my mother. Some aspects of this book, which I regard as a world-scripture, and of the message of the Sikh are brought together in this volume. The message, indeed, of the heroic lives lived by the Sikh *gurus* and martyrs is, to my mind, enshrined in the little scripture, the "Sukhmani". I write very briefly, very imperfectly, of only three of the Sikh Gurus in this volume,--Guru Nanak, Guru Arjan, Guru Gobind Singh. The first was the founder of the Sikh faith (1469-1538). His life and teachings, were so simple, yet so profound ; He saw life, he saw the Indian people's problem, from such a height ; We talk to-day of Hindu-Muslim unity, and with most of us this unity is only a political necessity. To him Hindu-Muslim unity was a deeper experience of the soul. Dr. Trump, his scholarship notwithstanding, failed to understand the spirit of the Gurus : but he admitted that many of the Muslims, became disciples of Guru Nanak. We talk to-day of religious toleration. Guru Nanak realised the great truth of the brotherhood of religions. He came at a time when there was conflict between Hindus and Muslims. He proclaimed a gospel of brotherhood and love. Dear to me is the name of this prophet of peace. His blessed feet sanctified the soil

## IN THE SIKH SANCTUARY

of Sind. During his travels to different parts of Asia (travels to Turkey and Arabia, Baghdad and Siam, Kabul and Kandhar, the Deccan and Ceylon, Bengal and Burmah) the Guru halted in Sind. According to a tradition he even went to Russia. And wherever he went, he preached a profoundly practical religion, a religion of peace, purity and service. One of his hymns is a beautiful summary of his teachings :

Love the saints of every faith;  
 Put away thy pride;  
 Remember the essence of religion  
 Is meekness and sympathy,---  
 Not fine clothes,  
 Not the yogy's garb and ashes,  
 Not the blowing of the horn,  
 Not the shaven head,  
 Not long prayers,  
 Not recitations and torturings,  
 Not the ascetic way,  
 But a life of goodness and purity  
 Amid the world's temptations.

Guru Nanak was the founder. Guru Arjan, who succeeded Guru Ram Das in 1581, was the great organiser. He spread the faith far and wide. His disciples were in so distant a place as Turkestan. Even to-day, I am told, there are disciples of the Gurus in Kabul & Kandahar. He passed away in 1606, tortured by the Government of his day, but remembering God in the midst of his physical sufferings, a disciple singing hymns to him ; It was this Guru who composed the "Sukhmani" a Poem to which a separate essay\* is devoted in this Volume. He, too,

compiled the "Granth Sahib," thus giving to India—I believe to the world—The first great Scripture of Synthesis. In the "Granth" are brought together hymns of Hindu and Muslim saints. Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) became the Builder of a Sikh Nation. Of these three only the founder, the organiser and the Nation-builder do I speak in this Volume; limits of space forbid my speaking of the other Gurus.

Our political problem, as I conceive it, is not one which party politics can solve. It is essentially a problem, not of 'reforms' and of freedom, but, therefore, a problem of life. And its solution must come from our own life. Any other 'solution' will be patch-work, a compromise with the full rights of our nationhood. I believe that some day India will be a free nation, an equal among equals. But when? There is no clock or calendar in a struggle for freedom. I believe *Swa-rajya*, a kingdom of freedom, will be realised in India when our collective life grows stronger in self-knowledge, self-discipline, self-sacrifice. The value of the Sikh scriptures, the value of the Gurus' message, lies in their potency to enrich our life and help it to prepare for the day of freedom. The unrest of to-day cannot press to freedom if it lacks a hidden reliance on the Spiritual Values of life. These helped Guru Gobind Singh to build up a Sikh Nation in the day of India's peril in the past. These helped the Sikh heroes in their struggle for freedom. We may speed on to freedom in the day we see the inner and eternal India. The Rajput guarded his nationalism

in the days of the great persecution by being loyal to his vision of the inner and eternal India. And in the Rajput songs which sing of the brave deeds of Rana Pratap one may still catch some echoes of the Rajput faith in the Race-soul. The Gurus developed a sense of the Race-soul among the Sikhs ; and the story of the Sikh deeds is one of the most stirring chapters in the world's history of heroism. Sikh heroism was an expression of the Sikh life. And that life was nourished on certain essential things of the soul. The Khalsa worshipped 'steel', but it was essentially a Society of Souls. Its basis was discipline and service and spiritual emotion. Boys became martyrs, and simple, rough peasants became patriots in answer to a spiritual message. Even women fought in Guru Gobind Singh's battles. They fought and were wounded ; they rejoiced in their sufferings ; their patriotism had the true ring of religion. Mai Bhago was a Sikh woman. So deeply spiritual was she that they revered her as a goddess. And she, helped by ten other Sikhs and wearing a heavy javelin, guarded the Guru's camp and bed at night. To her, as to many others, the strength to face danger came from the spiritual message of the Gurus and the scriptures. In one of his hymns Guru Nanak sings :—

Go to God in thy troubles,  
Meditate on His Name,  
Repeat thou His Name,  
And He will save thee,

This teaching of "going to God" sank into the soul of the Sikh community. It inspired heroism rare in the world's history. The Athenians fought against Persian imperialism ; they fought for freedom ; and on a famous occasion the Greek orator referred to them in rousing words :--"I swear by your forefathers, those that met the peril at Marathon, those that took the field at Platea, those in the sea-fight at Salamis and those at Artimesim and many other brave men who repose in the public monuments, all of whom alike, as being worthy of the same honour, the country buried." I underline that word '*honour*'. It indicates the dominant motive of the Greek heroes. For honour they faced the peril. But the Sikh heroes glimpsed the beauty of something higher than honour. They went out to meet difficulty and danger with the one song in their hearts :--"*Nanak Das Sada Kurbani*". "Thy Servant O. Nanak ! stands ready as a sacrifice." As servants of the Race they were moved by a sentiment of *Sacrifice*. They offered themselves in glad sacrifice to God. In sacrifice was the Sikh Nation built. In sacrifice, I am convinced, will India rise again. And it is my faith that the noblest sacrifice is inspired by a spiritual ideal.

Great has been the contribution of the Sikhs to India's life. And great, I believe, is the value of Sikh history and the Sikh Scripture for those who would help India to be a free Nation in the coming days. Reading of the recent sufferings of the Sikhs in the "Gurudwara" Struggle, my thoughts went out again

and again to the great days of the Gurus when the Sikhs died in their thousands in defence of freedom. What, I asked myself, was the power which sustained them in their sufferings ? And I looked into their history and their Scriptures and I read therein the answer to my question :--“ The Power of a Spiritual Ideal.” What fine men they were, the Sikhs ? How strong, yet how sweet ! How courageous, yet how humble ! How fearless, yet how simple ! Is it a wonder the Sikh faith spread quickly to the villages ? What a lesson to us are the Sikh disciples of those days ! If we would carry the Message of Swaraj to the villages (and India’s freedom will not be achieved without a village movement), we must combine strength and courage with sweetness and humility in our character. And we must be worshippers of the Ideal. Ideal-worship :--this is what I mean by religion. And, unless I am much mistaken, ‘nationalism’ divorced from ‘religion’ is too weak to achieve freedom. For at once the discipline and dynamic of a struggle for freedom come from the heart. Nothing can save the Nation in the difficult days before us without a new heart. Once recognise that, in the deepening unrest of to-day is the creative Spirit of God, and you will work for the Nation with a faith which no failures or disappointments will vanquish.

The Sikh message has also, I believe, a value for modern civilization. Since I visited Europe twelve years ago, the thought has grown upon me that the dominating civilization of the world has lost its way.

Civilization to-day seems threatened with a new Dark Age. It needs the light of the inner Values to lead it out of the night. Democracy, too, must find the inner values else would *Swaraj* mean not self-realization; but demagogic domination. Democracy must fail if it does not find a sufficient number of leaders who may also bear witness to the inner values of life. For ill-regulated power is not freedom. The 'activism' of Guru Gobind Singh was not a creed of aggression or exploitation, but of service and sacrifice. It has, I believe, a message for the modern world. It has a message, too, for India's young men. What they want to-day is a religion of service and sacrifice. Let them study Sikh history and the teachings of the Sikh Gurus; they will know that the lyrics of the Gurus and the lives of Sikh saints and martyrs sound the one great message of "activism". To me that message is a re-affirmation of the ancient word uttered by Sri Krishna : "Stand up ! Parantapa ! Do thy Duty". I heard a suggestive little story of a Sikh Guru. I know not if it is in the Sikh scriptures. The Guru was one day invited by a poor man to dine at his house. The Teacher of mercy accepted the invitation. On the appointed day he knocked at the door ; it was some time before the door opened. When the poor man came out he said to the Guru : "Master, forgive me that I did not open the door in time." The Teacher asked :--"What were you doing ?" The man replied : "Master ! I was driving nails into the wall." The teacher looked into the eyes of the poor man with

love and compassion and said : " Brother, what are you doing ? Driving nails into the wall ? Follow me." The poor man answered :---" Master : I follow thee." He left his all : he followed the Teacher ; he became a new man. I have talked to poor, simple men who rejoiced in the hymns of the Gurus ; and I have felt that in their companionship I was in the Sikh sanctuary. I have listened with tear-touched eyes to songs of bhakti sung from the " Granth Sahib " by Sikh minstrels ; and I have felt that I was with them in the Sikh sanctuary. I have prayed in Sikh temples ; I have spoken to men and women in Sikh temples ; I have chanted to myself, in some quiet hours, the " Sukhmani ;" and in such moments I have felt that I who am not a Sikh was yet permitted to be in the Sikh sanctuary. In such moments, too, has come to me a memory of that story of the Guru and his disciple :---" Brother : What are you doing ? Driving nails into the walls ?" And at this hour of the Nation's need I, who love India's students and young men, would fain pass on to them the affectionate exhortation of the Guru : " What are you doing ? Driving nails into the wall ? What are you doing young men ! at this hour of India's agony ? What are you doing ? Still immersed in the maya of ease and a comfort-civilization which induces forgetfulness of India's claims ?" Methinks the Gurus say to us at this hour : " Brothers, What are you doing ? Driving nails into the wall ?" And as I send out this little volume, I breathe an aspiration that some of India's young men who may

read these pages may have the strength to say in the spirit of the Sikh disciple of old :—“ Master ! the world calls us poor and weak. But our faith is strong. Our hearts are rich in love. We, too, shall follow thee :” Such young men will, I am convinced, keep the Guru’s faith. Such young men will be the soldiers of swaraj.

Karachi,

March, 1922

T. L. VASWANI







## THE MESSAGE OF THE GURUS

### I

Once the story moved the multitudes  
And entered their hearts, singing the song of the free.  
Once its message spread from village to village  
And down the fields and down the streets  
In shouts of faith.  
To-day the sons of sages  
Keep a heart for hoarding,  
And the message of the Gurus moves them not.

### II

To-day they think of the passing things,  
Of the little gains of silver and gold :—  
Not of them, democracy's early prophets,  
The Gurus who taught and lived the truth  
That life is sacrifice,  
That Victory is to him who builds  
For the kingdom of dharma,  
That martyrs live long after tyrants are no more

### III

The Gurus are not dead.  
They stand behind the veil  
Watching India's children in their sad decline.

Alas ! we live to-day in self-forgetfulness ;  
We drift from India's dreams ;  
And, in quest of riches which make men poor,  
We wander in weakness and fear  
Refusing to raise ourselves to the freedom of the free.

## IV

Sons of the Sages of the East,  
Long has been your wandering !  
It is time to come home  
And find the long-lost faith.  
It is time to seek your gain in loss,  
Your strength in self-surrender,  
Your wisdom in the scripture of Truth,  
Your wealth in love's poverty and pain.

## V

It is time to commune with the heroes of your history,  
It is time to tread the lonely way,  
And build new freedom  
Out of your past and the struggle of to-day.  
Behold : a new age knocks at your door !  
Awake ! and offer it the worship of sacrifice  
And of the faith your fathers kept :  
Awake : and let the God in you grow :

## THE GURU AND HIS GOSPEL

There is a story somewhere in ancient books of how a prophecy had gone forth that a star announcing the advent of a mighty one was to illuminate the world. And the people and their kings believed in the prophecy. Twelve learned men, well-versed in astronomy, were chosen by the kings and asked to go up a mountain than which there was no higher in the world. And the twelve men went up the heights and watched by day and by night for the coming of the star. Years passed one by one. One by one the twelve men died. Their places were taken by others. The star did not appear ; and the people in soul-agony prayed to God :--“Lord ! show us the star which is to announce the advent of a mighty one who is to raise and redeem the race”. And a star appeared at last, a star brighter than the sun. The people rejoiced, and kings with riches and royal garments, with silver and gold, with horses and camels, went forth to pay their homage to the mighty one who had appeared. They found the new-born child clad in simple garment but covered with celestial beauty. And when the kings returned from their

pilgrimage to the child, each one built a beautiful temple in honour of him for whom they had watched so long in faith and love.

Is this only a story, a legend of the past? Or is it an allegory, a pictorial representation of a truth of history? Such a star brighter than the sun has appeared, I believe, not once, not twice, not thrice, but over and over again. When agony and unrighteousness spread over the earthplane, and the world's need is piteous, a 'star' appears, announcing the advent of a mighty one. So you read in the Gita that when there is decay of *dharma* and increase of *adharma* the Lord appears for the help and healing of the world. So Guru Amar Das wrote :—

"When in agony the Earth prays  
And the True One listens  
And in His mercy grants consolation,  
He gives orders to the cloud,  
And the Rain falls in torrents."

The 'rain' is the appearance of the Ideal in a human form. As a Sikh scripture declares :—"The Guru is one, though the garbs are many." And the Guru came in the long ago when India's need was urgent. Fourteen years before Martin Luther, in the little town of Talwandi--now known as Nankana--was born one whom I regard as very much greater than Martin Luther. He came at a critical period in India's history. India was slipping fast into the hands of the mighty Moghul. Hindus and Musalmans were bitterly opposed to one another. The mild Hindu despised the

Muhammadan as an untouchable ; and the sturdy Musalman despised the Hindu as a *kafir*, an infidel. Religion had degenerated into formalism ; and the spirit of worship was stifled by ecclesiasticism. The Teacher described India's state in the following words:- " Kings are butchers ; cruelty is their weapon. The sense of duty has taken wings and vanished. Falsehood is over the land as a veil of the darkness of the darkest night. The moon of Truth shines no more." In this dark hour of India's history Nanak appeared. He was born in the Punjab, the ancestral home of India's religious consciousness ; the land where in the long long ago Vedic hymns were sung and verses of the Upanishads recited ; the land where in later times Buddhism built some of its great temples and libraries and universities. In this land where, in Nanak's days, were drawn together the diverse types of thought and life represented by Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and the Sufi mysticism of Iram, did the Teacher take his birth. Not many in his day realised the significance of the Guru's coming. Not many understood that he was to give a message mightier than the princes and principalities of the earth. Many, indeed, thought him to be a madcap ! In one of the hymns the Guru calls himself, in a deep spiritual sense, "simpleton Nanak who has become mad on the Lord ". Such "mad" men are the true supermen of history. And they are misunderstood. Nanak's mother became anxious. She told him once that many regarded him as mad : he was always repeating the 'Name' ! To her he answered :

They who forget the Name  
Are the falsest of the false.

Without the Name how shall I live  
O Mother ?

Some other day she told him to go abroad and give up his devotions for some time so that the people might know that he was no longer mad ! And Nanak answered :

To repeat the Name is to live.

To forget is to die.

Then how can I forget It,

My Mother ?

They who forget their spouse are faithless ;

Without His name they are nought.

Even a physician was called in to cure him of his 'madness', But Nanak said :

Physician! go home

Few know my malady.

The Creator gave me this pain;

He only can remove it,

Asked by his father to attend to his lands, he said he was already a "God's farmer". Asked to keep a shop he said that to take home 'profits' one must be a 'dealer' of the true Name. Is it a wonder that many, including his own father, thought him a madman ? Such "mad" men have made history. India's rank and royalty did not realise that in the message which the Guru came to give to India and the world there was a breath of the Spirit, and therefore, a power superior to that of the rulers of the earth. The faith of Nanak became, as the student of history knows, the foundation of a new nationality. The faith of Nanak has been a shaping and lifting power in India. It has

built up the community of the Sikhs who can, like the Japanese, show a wondrous record of courage and sacrifice. The kingdom which Baber built has passed away ; the kingdom of faith which we associate with Nanak's name stands. His dear disciples called him by many names,—Lord, Prince, Saviour, Father ; but he spoke of himself as 'a servant of the Beloved One'. This consciousness of being a servant of the Beloved One was with him from the beginning of his days. His parents gave him money : he spent it in the service of others. He met a *sadhu* and gave away his brass jug and gold finger-ring to him. His father was annoyed. "Give up these ways" he said to Nanak, "and walk after the manner of other people". He did not know that his boy, Nanak, was a "servant of the Beloved One".

This consciousness of being a servant of the Beloved One grew upon him as the years passed. There occurred that incident in his life which the books have described so well. Nanak goes to a river : he begins to bathe. The angels of the Lord, the story tells us, take him to the court of the Highest. The servant waits long and at last goes to the Khan (the Chief) to inform him that Nanak entered the river but is not come out again. The Khan sends men to search for Nanak. Nanak is invisible. He has been lifted to the threshold of the Lord. The Lord holds a cup of *amrit* (the water of Immortal Life) and offers it to Nanak, saying :—"Drink thou this. I am with thee. I have made thee exalted. Be thou uncontaminated

with the world. I have given thee my name. Be thou dedicated to it". Dr. Trumpp calls this incident a 'mere accident.' May we not regard it as the Teacher's consciousness of the Call which comes to him to go upon his mission ? In obedience to the Call the Guru resolves to go on his missionary expeditions to preach the Name. His parents persuade him to remain at home. They ask him to mount a horse, and see the new house built at some distance. His only answer is : " Father ! horses are of no use to me." Is he not a servant of the Beloved One ? He visits places of Hindu and Mohammadan worship to speak to the people about the 'True One,' the 'Eternal Verity' whom they have forgotten. He goes to the '*jogi*'-land to tell them of the true *Yoga*, the true spiritual life which must not be confounded with psychism. He travels through Hindustan. He is a lover of the desert as a fit place for contemplation. And he comes to the desert of Sindh—my native land—and sanctifies its soil with his presence. He goes to the Deccan. He visits Kashmere in the North, and Ceylon,—the Sanghalla Dip—in the South. He journeys to Kabul in Afghanistan, and to Mecca in Arabia. He visits Constantinople. He treads the noisy hills of China. He travels to Rome. He goes from place to place bearing witness to the message of the Beloved One. What credentials does he give concerning his message ? He claims nothing. He makes no show of his spiritual powers. He speaks with holy humility of himself. Over and over again he calls himself a sinner. "I am

not chaste nor learned ; foolish and stupid I was born." "As a large ocean is full of water, so am I full of sin. Be thou gracious, Beloved One ! Thou who enabled sunken stones to float !" So speaks the Teacher concerning himself. Yet those who listen to him feel that his words are charged with a strange power. They listen to him and experience peace and joy. Not without reason did his disciples inform Arjan, after the Master passed away, that "by hearing the word of Guru Nanak tranquility came to the mind, and desire for worship increased." When he opened his lips to speak, something seemed to go out of him—a power, a mystic influence. So he overcomes opposition. So disciples are drawn to him from the ranks of Hindus and Musalmans. Muja Mitha, a Muslim saint, becomes his disciple. Dunichand, a rich Hindu of Benares, follows him and is asked to distribute his lakhs of rupees, in alms. The Guru secures the friendship and companionship of the Muslim Pir, Sheikh Farid. He is greeted by the Hindus as a messenger of Ishwara, and the Mohammadans exclaim : "Here is one favoured of *Allah*. *Khuda* is speaking to us in Nanak!" And he goes about asking nothing for himself, asking only for opportunities to serve the people. Baber the Moghul Emperor, tells Nanak to ask for some favour. Boldly answers the Guru:-

Here, O Baber Meer :

Foolish is the Fakir

Who begs of kings :

For God is the only giver.

• •

On another occasion, too, being asked by the king to accept a present, the Teacher says:-

Nanak is hungry for God :  
 Nanak asks for nought ;  
 I ask for God ;  
 I ask for nothing else.

Love of God expresses itself as the service of man. Prophets are also patriots. Their faith gives them courage. Their love of God becomes service of the God-in-man. When Baber sacked Saiydpur,---a town in the Punjab--the Guru has the courage to rebuke the king to his face :

Baber rules over Thurasan,  
 Baber terrifies Hindusthan.

Then comes a most moving touch. The Teacher. says :

When there was such slaughter and lamentation  
 Didst Thou not, Lord ! feel pain?

A counsel of courage is then administered by the Guru to the people. They must not submit to tyranny. They must meet the challenge of wrong with the moral power of a manly soul. The Guru says :

If a tyrant slay a tyrant  
 One is not angry.  
 But when a lion falls on a herd  
 Its master should show its manliness.

On another occasion, seeing some prisoners before him, his whole heart goes out to them. He sings a hymn. He falls into samadhi. He becomes 'unconscious'. On recovering his waking consciousness he asks the king to set all the captives free.

What is the character of his message ? The test of a true message is its simplicity. Only so may it appeal to the universal heart of man. Guru Nanak delivers a message which is simple yet profound, in the simple, homely, rural language of the simple folk. In a variety of ways he calls men back to worship of the Truth. In the very opening section of his poems named the Japji we have the remarkable statement "At the beginning of the Yug (the Age) is the True One.", And thus is indicated the idea that the Truth, 'the Eternal Verity,' is the fountain-head of cosmic evolution in every age. Hence his emphasis on the *real* in religious life. Religion, he points out, again and again, is not a matter of forms or speculation. Worship is of the heart. Rites and ceremonies, when not subordinated to the spiritual ideal, have no value. It is Truth that the Guru asks his disciples to worship. "I know", he says, "that the whole creation is strung with the Thread of His Order (Law)." He distinguishes religion or spirituality from formalism. Tired and spent in strength, he enters one day the Muslim mosque at Mecca ; and there he is found sleeping with his feet turned to the *Kabba*. The keeper of the mosque-the Imam-kicks him and says:- "What have you done ? You are sleeping with your feet turned to the Kabba ? Is not this the place of God ?" What answer does the Guru give ?--"Be not angry, I request : tired where shall I turn my feet where the House of God is not ?" So at Benares he enters into a discussion with Pandit Chattar Das, saying to him :

"Wash your mind rather than the stone images." When as a boy he is asked to go through the thread ceremony he in a number of verses, asks the priest to remember that there is another thread which the soul may put on---the thread of Love, whereof the cotton is compassion and the knots are abstinence and truth. Such a thread he says, is not snapped, nor soiled nor burnt, nor lost. The solidarity of mankind is another great truth he sings in his Songs. Precious to the Sikhs is the word *Bhai*. It means 'brother'. The Guru has taught the sacred truth of Brotherhood. Hence it is that every member of the Sikh community is a bhai ; all are bhais, brothers, whether kings or warriors or preachers or students of science and literature. "We claim brotherhood with all", says the Guru. "Nor caste nor birth is asked at the holy house of the Lord." "Be not proud of your caste. The whole creation germinated out of one Brahma." He mingles freely with the poor and neglected ones. He accepts their invitation in preference to those of rich men who, he knows, invite him for self-glorification. He dines at the house of Lalu, a poor man. There is, I have often said, but one sin. It is the sin of separateness. It is the sin against the solidarity of life and the brotherhood of man.

This prophet of Hindu-Muslim Unity sees the higher harmony of the Hindu and Islamic faiths in the One Religion, which is the worship of God and service of the God-in-man. He loves the Muslim ; he loves Islam. In the blue dress of a Muslim pilgrim and

with a carpet for prayers, he proceeds to Mecca. Asked at Mecca if he was a Hindu or a Muslim he says he is neither ; he discerns God in both. Asked which is superior, Hinduism or Islam, he says : "Without good acts, the professors of both will perish." In one of his hymns we read : "There is no Hindu and no Mussalman." In another passage we have the significant words : "To him whose delusion of the heart is gone, Hindu and Mussalman are the same." At Baghdad they ask him to which Sect he belongs. He replies : "I have renounced all sects. I only know the one God who is in the earth, the heavens and all directions." He accepts a Muslim as his beloved disciple--for Mardana was a Muslim,—and to him the Guru has dedicated three slokas to be found in the *Granth Sahib*. Again and again he warns his disciples against the sin of separateness. In a beautiful passage he sings : "Numberless Thy worshippers and numberless Thy lovers. Numberless Thy heroes, who face the steel of their enemies. Numberless Thy silent worshippers who lovingly fix their thoughts on Thee. Thy musical instruments and sounds are many, and innumerable are thy musicians." And is not each one of the world-religions His musical Gita ? Such is the great message the Teacher delivers to his disciples. He also asks them to accept a spiritual discipline, a *sadhan*, without which there is no freedom. This discipline is, in the first place, devotion to the Name. The very first word of the Japji is *Sat Nam*, the Name of the 'Eternal Verity'. In the Name is

rooted the life of religion. "Sow the Name," says the Guru, "Sow the Name. Now is the season to throw away all doubt and fear." "Burn to ashes your silk and velvet if they draw you away from the Name of the Lord." "May I not forget Thee, O Giver of the instrument sounding notes of Love for the help and healing of man": The *sadhan* of which the Teacher speaks is, in the second place *tahal seva*, the service of man. In many ways does the Guru speak of the supreme value of *tahal*--Service. Is not his life a luminous commentary on the meaning of service? How many KaudaRakshas and Sajjan Thugs did he not redeem during his missionary expeditions. Imprisoned in 1526, the Teacher spends his time in jail in reforming the thieves and singing to them the name of the Lord. Service is the *sadhan* which the Guru enjoins on every one of his disciples. Yet Dr. Trumpp would have us believe that Sikhism is not a "moralising" religion: Consider how in the dark days of India the Sikhs were prepared to give up their very lives but not to renounce their loyalty to the Faith. The Guru's repeated prayer was: "May I unto the Eternal Verity be a sacrifice!" One of the beautiful incidents mentioned in the Sikh books is the story of how the Teacher sends one day his dear disciple Mardana with a copper coin to buy a piece of paper; and Mardana returns with the paper on which are written the words: "Death the Truth and life the falsehood." So true it is that they who seek life shall lose it, but they who lose it in the service of man will enrich life.

Yet another *Sadhan* is *bhakti*, the culture of the emotions. "Teach me how to live immersed in Thy meditation day and night" "Grant, O Lord ! that I may never think of aught save Thee and that I may sing of Thee ever and ever." Again :--"O my heart ! love God as the lotus loves the water. The more it is beaten by the waves, the more its love is excited ; having received its life in water, it dies without water". "O my heart ! love God as the *chatak* loves the rain" -- who even when fountains are full and the land green is not satisfied as long as it cannot get a drop of rain. Again :--" Whichever side I cast mine eye, there Thou art. Parted from Thee I burst and die".

As we recall incident after incident of his life, we sometimes say to ourselves :--" Oh ! that we had the privilege his first disciples had of hearing his wondrous words and seeing his sacred Beauty and kissing his blessed feet !" We forget that he has passed into the Unseen only to come nearer to us in spirit. He has gone away in order to enter into us, into the life of India, the life of the world. A beautiful Sikh belief has it that the one Light passed into other Gurus. And may I be permitted to say that the one Light has never vanished ? It has passed into the Sikh community. It is in each one of us. Only let us break the barriers of passion and prejudice, of separateness, sectarianism and strife. Only let us remove the obstacles, so that the Light may shine with splendour. The Nations need the Light ; Civilization needs it. But the Light shines through those who develop the perceptive power of

Love. Guru Nanak's call is the call of Love. The kings in the story of which I spoke went upon a pilgrimage to the Holy Child ; and returning to India each one built a beautiful temple in honour of the Child. If in our hearts we build such temples of love He will enter them, and with His hands will He Light the lamps of worship and on His Flute will He play the Sacred Song to bless and beautify our lives. Then charged with the power of humility and with love and longing in our eyes we may go forth to join the ranks of India's silent *sadhaks*. Then may this Iron Age hearken to the Song of Ages--the song that trembles on leaf and flower and fruit, and floats from stream to stream and star to star--the Song of the Spirit, re-sung, re-published by the Guru who called himself "a servant of the Beloved One".

## A PROPHET OF FREEDOM

Two centuries and a half have passed but the birth-day of this Nation-builder lives. He is not of the Sikhs alone. He belongs to India. And his message has a value for us in the Struggle of to-day.

A western critic has compared him to Napoleon. The comparison is not correct. Napoleon was a great soldier, a great military general. Guru Gobind Singh was a warrior-saint. He was entirely without the pride or self-consciousness of Napoleon. To read his hymns is to know how humble was this mighty man of action. Foch, in a recent tribute to Napoleon, traced his fall to moral causes. Napoleon was an egoist. Guru Gobind Singh built a Sikh Nation on a basis essentially moral. He often spoke of himself as having found strength by taking refuge at the feet of God. Napoleon and Guru Gobind Singh belong to different classes. There is a pretty belief among the Polish peasants. They say that every year on Christmas night there appears between heaven and earth a ladder on which angels descend to bless the earth. Such a ladder in a sense, appears again and again, not on Christmas night alone ; and mighty souls come from time to time

to bless the earth. One such, I believe, was Guru Gobind Singh.

He stood, for some time remote from actual life. He was a mystic and loved to have quiet communion with God. Then as he advanced in years there came to him a knowledge of India's sad state. The sin of Moghul imperialism was fanaticism, as the sin of British imperialism is exploitation. A policy of fanaticism deepened discord when what was needed was a principle of cohesion to guard India against the 'stranger from the West. It was a profound political truth Guru Tegh Bahadur expressed when he said : "That man is reckoned the wisest who gives no cause of fear to others and is himself without fear". Guru Gobind Singh saw that his country had become a victim to a policy of fanaticism. His own father was cruelly persecuted by the Government, and endured the extreme sufferings of death in a spirit worthy of a Guru who taught that man should be "without fear". The iron entered into the soul of Guru Gobind Singh. The mystic became a practical man. I have related elsewhere the broad incidents of his life. I shall not repeat them. Let me say only this : He loved India: he lived for her : he died for her : his sons died as witnesses to their father and the Sikh faith. I regard him as one of our early prophets of Freedom.

To convert every Sikh into a Singh--in that one line is summed up to my mind, the message of the Guru. It is a message we need to-day. As I have surveyed the present situation, as day after day has

brought news of the struggle and sufferings of my Sikh brothren in the Punjab, as I have thought of India's patriots behind prison-bars, I have felt, again and again, that the Guru's message will help us much at this anxious hour:—Let every *Sikh* become a *Singh* 'Sikh' means a disciple.' 'Singh' means a 'lion.' Every one who would be a 'Sikh,' a disciple of the Ideal, must become a man of manhood. This I regard as the central message of Guru Gobind Singh's life.

Three qualities, as it seems to me, were emphasised by the Guru as essential to every one who would be *Singh*, a man of manhood. The first is self-respect. I have often thought of Guru Gobind Singh as a prophet of democracy. The Guru developed among his disciples a democratic--consciousness, a characteristic common to Sikhism and Islam. The peasants showed wonderful devotion to the Guru ; was he not to them a symbol of the Highest ? He could command them ; he respected them. And over and over again he taught them to have respect for themselves and others.

Respect for the poor :—this is, to my mind, one of the great lessons of Indian History. In the day we lost respect for the poor the world lost respect for this country. In the day we recover that respect, India's voice will be heard again in the counsels of the nations. The true Sikh is democratic ; he respects the poor ; he respects the voice of the community. Ranjit Singh offended Sikhs by falling into some evil ways. Baba Phula Singh pointed out to him his faults. And in

humility and repentance the great king of the Punjab laid bare his body to be flogged! Ranjit Singh respected the voice of his community. And society is helped by every one who respects himself and the Community. What I speak of as self-respect is not without its responsibilities. The man who has self-respect will not take bribes ; he will consider it beneath his dignity to take advantage of another in trouble ; remembering that he calls himself a *Sikh*, a disciple of the Master, he will behave with moral dignity. The teacher who has self-respect will respect his pupils ; he will not call them 'liars' or 'fools'. He will see in every pupil a seedling of Divinity. Of a German professor it is said that he always raised his hat to his students when he entered his class-room ; he respected his pupils. An Indian merchant, I am told, sold to a European a carpet for a few thousand rupees, telling the latter that the carpet was an Indian carpet of a fine pattern. The carpet was *not* Indian! It could be bought in Paris for a few hundreds; That Indian merchant trampled upon his self-respect, in that act of dishonesty, he betrayed India's honour. And every one of us who practises dishonesty, or takes bribes, or has hate in his heart for the 'stranger,' dishonours India and so tramples upon self-respect. To be a *Singh* a man must respect himself, respect the poor, and be loyal to the Indian ideal of life.

Yet another quality which a man must have if he would be a *Singh*.—a man of Manhood.—is courage. The man of courage stands for what he believes to be

true regardless of consequences. And he has the strength to rebuke the wrong, and fight against injustice. To read the *Granth Sahib*,---the second *Granth* written by Guru Gobind Singh--- is to know how fearlessly the Sikh Guru opposed the Government of his day. It was a power-intoxicated government. "Thou," he says, addressing the king in one of his verses, "with the intoxication of sovereignty art keeping on puffing up thy heart." The Guru inspired the Sikhs with a new courage in the national struggle of those days. His 'worship' of the Steel and his prayer to Durga were a symbolic representation of his cult of courage. Durga is, in the books, the Goddess of Valour. But we should not confound the Guru's cult of courage with what some German writers have called the "religion of valour" which really means the 'religion of hate and blood'! The German "religion of valour" was not inspired, as Guru Gobind Singh's was, by a sense of the Internal. It believes in "Might is Right." Guru Gobind Singh believed in "Right is Might." He and his disciples combined courage with humility. In a hymn in the *Granth Sahib*, Guru Gobind Singh sings—

Eternal God, thou art our shield,  
The dagger, knife, the Sword we wield !  
To us protection thou hast given,  
The timeless, deathless Lord of Heaven ;  
To us all, steel's unvanquished might ;  
To us all, times, resistless flight ;  
But chiefly thou protector brave  
All Steel, wilt thine own Servants save.

What the Guru called Steel, the Hindu scriptures have named *Shakti*. The Guru and his disciples worshipped *Shakti* and became India's guardians in that day of India's need. India fell again when she returned to a worship of weakness. Contentment with the actual, servility, flattery, fear, dissociation, lovelessness, un-faith,—these have dragged India down from the heights on which she stood in happier days. India has worshipped weakness, and is yet unfree. A cult of courage is our need to-day. The fashionable 'cult of the gentleman' means so often "elaborate duplicity." We are not yet free, for we do not yet dare to believe in freedom.

Another quality emphasised by Guru Gobind Singh was sacrifice. Often, indeed, the man of courage has to suffer for the truth he would serve. Sikh history is a wonderful record of sufferings endured for faith and freedom. Once, according to a Sikh story, a new musket was brought as a present to Guru Gobind Singh. He said—in good humour, one may be sure,—that he wanted to try the musket on some one's forehead. He paused to know if any one of his followers would offer himself for the "trial." Quick came up a number of Sikhs, each one regarding it a privilege to meet death at his Guru's hands. His disciples were trained in a school of hardship, and his love impressed on their minds the truth that life must not be hoarded but poured out as a sacrifice.

What makes the Sikh records almost unique in the world's annals is the number of women and young

men and boys who entered into the great Sikh struggle for freedom. How cheerfully they suffered privations, persecutions, even death ! The four sons of the Guru were arrested, but were promised release on condition that they would leave their father. What did they say ? " We shall stand by our father and resist *adharma*." It was a painful death they were subjected to. They were bricked up alive. But to the last they stood with divine defiance in their eyes, saying : " Do thy business, tyrant ; We are happy;" And their last aspiration was breathed out in the beautiful prayer : " Thy Will be done, O God !" They practised the lesson taught by the Guru who said : " Meditate on him in thy heart." And so they found the strength to suffer for faith, and glorify God in the midst of isolation and agony. They were boys of tender age. Several others suffered cruel deaths in the mighty struggle for freedom led by Guru Gobind Singh. And, as I have said, there were women, too, in the struggle. We read in Greek books of the women of Sparta who, missing their sons and husbands and brothers among their countrymen returned from the battle, said : They died for their country. They died for the republic." These mothers had in them the spirit of the Sikh women and sons and husbands who went out singing--to die. And at this hour I fain would ask my countrymen to commune with Guru Gobind Singh and other heroes of Sikh history. Let the mighty Spirit that worked in them be our Leader in the struggle of to-day, and the Nation will not be left in the night.

## SUKHMANI OR PEACE-CHANT

The Sukhmani is one of the books in the collection known as the *Granth Sahib*. It is a wonderful scripture, the Sikh *Granth*. I regard it a world-scripture. The Rishis composed the *Upanishads* in quiet communion with Nature. And the Sikh Guru Arjun sat in a tent pitched in a beautiful spot of Nature to compile hymns. He brought together in one book the hymns of Hindu saints and Muslim Fakirs. *Granth* is a scripture of synthesis. There were many Hindus and Muslims who persecuted the Guru for having compiled this scripture of synthesis. Who was he, they argued, to speak of Allah in the same breath with Rama? There were *Kazis* and *Pandits* who complained that the *Granth* had hymns in which Muslim saints and Hindu gods were spoken of with contempt. The complaints reached the ears of Akbar. That Muslim king was himself in search of some message of synthesis; and on listening to hymns from the *Granth* he said :-- "It is a volume worthy of reverence." This scripture was completed in 1604. After three centuries it still has a message for us, a message \*for the world. Out of the World-

Soul it rolled. Sukhmani is but one section of this world-scripture.

There are hymns in the *Granth* composed and sung by other Gurus and *bhaklas* and simply brought together by Guru Arjun ; but the Sukhmani is a song composed by the Guru himself. Sukhmani is an outpouring of the Guru's soul. I have in my meditations viewed the Guru in four aspects as an organiser, a poet, a seer of a synthesis, a martyr of faith. And I have said to myself, what a colossal figure ! He lived in the sixteenth century. We of the twentieth may boast of 'science' and 'civilization'. We feel as pygmies in his presence ; He organised the Sikhs into a community. He completed the tanks of Amritsar. He extended the city of Ramdaspur. He planned the Harmandir. He founded Taran Taran. He purchased land to build another city and named it Kartarpur. And this organiser was a poet-seer ! To him came a perception of the truth that there is one Religion in religions, as in the various forces of nature there is really but one Force, that which in Hindu books has been rightly named *Shakti*. Guru Arjun saw the higher harmony of Hindu *bhakti* and Muslim mysticism. And he had the courage, rare in those days, to bring together in the *Granth Sahib*, the sayings of Hindu saints and Muslim *fakirs*. He suffered for it. He was tortured to death by the Government of his day. But he would not, for a moment, falter in his vision. He would not, he said to his king, change even an iota in the *Granth Sahib*.

It could not be, "if he would change it, a scripture of synthesis, of human brotherhood," a scripture of that one Spirit "whom the sages call by many names." He preferred death to disloyalty to the faith of his soul. And he had the courage to say to his sovereign : " If in following the truth, this perishable body depart, I shall rejoice deeming it great good fortune ! "

In this saint dwelt a poet's soul. His hymns are a poet's offerings to the Spirit of Nature,---the Spirit of Humanity.

Make Truth thy prayer  
 Mak F aith thy prayer-carpet  
 Thy body is the temple,  
 Thy conscience is the priest,  
 And the very pure God thy creed  
 Every heart is His casket,  
 Every thing is an extension of God :

The Guru's hymns are strewn with such passages at once tender in poetic beauty and philosophic in suggestiveness. "Sukhmani", we read in the book, "dwelleth in the heart of the saints." And in the heart of Guru Arjun dwelt the Sukhmani. In his heart was the peace which comes of communion with the Ideal. Sukhmani means "The peace (or joy) of the heart." May I not speak of Sukhmani as "Peace-Chant ?" And this peace in the Guru's heart was only deepened by the agony of the last few days of his earth-life. Not many in the world's history have suffered in the spirit which sustained the Guru in those days when a cruel Government inflicted on his body indescribable tortures. It is the spirit which to

him was of the essence of the *Granth* and which he expressed in three beautiful words :-- Truth, patience and meditation. The Guru was loyal to truth ; the Guru was patient in suffering ; the Guru met the cruel torture of his body with the weapon of meditation. Blood corpuscles, we are told, swim about in a fluid which contains iron. Our blood has iron. Our blood needs iron. Without iron in the blood there would not be the flame of life. This is true also *meta-physically*. The iron entered into the soul of Guru Arjun ; and the 'flame of his life did not flicker. It seems to be will of God that spiritual iron should enter the soul of India for the fulfilment of India's destiny.

Let me refer to some of the characteristics of the Sukhmani. I have been impressed, in the first place, with its lack of dogmatism or speculative theology. Sukhmani is pre-eminently practical in its outlook upon the problems of life. When was the world created? How many spirits can dance on the point of a needle? Questions such as these engaged the attention of many theologians in Christian Europe during the pre-scientific era. Questions such as these are ignored by the Guru as having no reference to the life of religion. Such questions, I may add, are prejudicial to the development of spiritual life in the measure in which they disturb concentration on the vital values of religion. Sukhmani is a gospel of life. I am impressed, too, with its note of devotion to the Ideal. Yet a third characteristic of the book, as I understand it, is its

atmosphere of companionship with the Guru. Every hymn ends on the note: "Nanak says." Guru Arjun merges himself in the first Guru. And as I read hymn after hymn of this book, the feeling grows upon me that the Sukhmani is, in a deep spiritual sense, the voice of Guru Nanak himself. There is a beautiful picture, painted I believe by a devout Sikh. It represents Guru Nanak as sitting under the shade of a stately tree. On one side of the Master is Mardana, on the other side is Bala ; and the Master is meditating on the mystery of the ages. Under such a tree was the Sukhmani sung by Guru Arjun and written under his dictation by a disciple for the *Granth*. And as I have recited the verses of the Sukhmani I have sometimes felt as though the infinite living Ideal was calling the soul to come and sit, as sat those dear disciples of the Gurus, under the shade of the Tree called in Hindu books the Tree of Life.

The message of the Sukhmani, as I said, is pre-eminently practical. It sings of peace. It also sings of the path to peace. The path is not one of ascetic abstraction from the world. It is a positive path. Through life must we attain to peace. In a beautiful text in the Sukhmani we are told that we are come to this world to get "merchandise." Vakhar is the word used. It means "goods," "merchandise." It suggests the meaning of life. Life, we are sometimes told, is a pilgrimage. Life, too, is regarded as a voyage, the world, the *samsar*, being represented as a great sea. Life is a pilgrimage. Life is a voyage. But there is

yet another, to my mind a more positive conception. We are in this world to get 'merchandise.' Not to get away from the world, not to spurn it with the ascetic's scorn, but to have commerce, to carry on certain transactions with the infinite Ideal that calls us to Itself within the veils of time and space. We are in the world as merchants. Our business is to be rich. We are here to enrich ourselves. Life is enrichment. From the World-Heart we came to this earth-plane to gather experiences, to enrich ourselves. Years ago when I passed the matriculation examination I wished to join a college. There was no college then in my native town. I must leave my mother and the town if I would join a college. My mother's eyes were touched with tears. For some time she would not let me go. Then she summoned courage and said: "Go, and return to me enriched with the treasure of knowledge." The Mother-Heart whence we come, lets us be here that we may gather experiences on the earth-plane and may return to It enriched. Life is enrichment. We are here to get *vakhar*.

This *vakhar* comes with discipline. The soul is enriched when she fulfils the obligations of life. One recalls the great teaching of Sri Krishna : "Do thy duty." To the Gurus, as to the *Rishis* of the Upanishads, the world had a meaning. Over and over again we read in the Sikh scriptures : "His name is Verity" Again : "He watcheth his own field, at once concealed and manifest." Yes, He watcheth His children in the field and wishes, none to leave his allotted space. In

another text we read : " He who created the earth made men's coming and going " in order that men might have the discipline of life, and, cut and polished by pain, may shine in the temple of His servants. It is a three-fold lesson we learn in life's school of discipline. There is, first, the lesson of self-control. A boy is sent to the school. He must learn self-control if he would gather knowledge. Concentration is a form of self-control. The student grows to be man. He must think of his wife. Gradually the lesson is learnt that marriage is not meant to be a romance, but a *Sadhan*; selfish impulses are aroused only to be subdued. The great lesson is learn that to live is to serve. The husband becomes the father of a family. A child falls ill. The father and mother must keep awake night after night to nurse the child. They must suffer for the sake of their darling. The child grown into manhood must forego many things for the sake of his aged parents. The great lesson is thus learnt that life's gifts are to be shared with others; are to be poured as a sacrifice on the altar of the Ideal.

*Sadhan*--this is the first method of man's education and enrichment. Another method, too, is indicated in the *Sukhmani*. It is the method of *Sadh-Sang*, the method of fellowship with the *Sadhu*. Who are the *Sadhus*? The question is answered in a number of beautiful verses in the *Sukhmani*. *Sadhus* are servants of the Ideal. They are the wakened ones. We often sleep in forgetfulness. They are awake to the Ideal.

"The beloved of my Lord are awake ", says the Guru; "The *sádhu* lives in the world, but uncontaminated, as the lotus is untouched by the water." His nature, we read, is like that of fire which purifies everything. He is humble, "the dust of all men's feet." "He dwells in peace and is full of tender love." "Nectar rains from his glance." "O God !", says the Guru "be gracious to me that my heart may become the dust of the *Sadhus'* feet." In another passage we read: "Reflect in association with the *Sadhus*." There are young men to-day who argue that thought and religion are in conflict. To them the Guru says : " Think, by all means ; reflect : but in association with the good." Religion is not irrational ; and in the *Sukhmani* there are passages of rare beauty bearing upon the value of knowledge in religious life. Religion without reflective consciousness threatens to become superstition. Reflect ; but, says the Guru, not in isolation. Reflect in fellowship with some of the great souls, the *Sadhus* who are in tune with verity. You need vibrations of the good to help you in your quest of Truth. The stimulus of environment helps much in developing thought. And if you are in contact with the environment of a *Sadhu*-soul you will be helped in your thinking. The higher consciousness, often staying below the threshold of waking consciousness, will be stimulated, and you will think better. In the society of the *Sadhus*, as we read in the *Sukhmani*, "the light of wisdom shines in a man's heart." • •

There is a third method of education also referred

to in the Sukhmani. I may name it the method of inwardness. The Sukhmani sings, again and again, of meditation. The ideal is not afar, but within. In the shrine of the heart is the play of Its glory. If we see It not, it is because we sleep on while the Beloved is awake. And even when some awakening comes, we do but wander like Arthur's knights, wander here and there in quest of the Ineffable Presence that is already in the House within. We go searching for Him abroad when He has entered unbidden the temple-niche of the heart and Himself lit the unused lamp to teach us how to worship Him.

Concerning this method of meditation, two things are emphasised in the Sukhmani. The first is : Meditate on the Name of God.

Ever ever repeat the Name,  
 To utter the Name  
 Standing sitting or sleeping  
 Is ever the duty of Man  
 God's Name is the sum-total of all faith.  
 Nanak hath meditated on Thy Name  
 The true Name hath saved him  
 Men recite the **Vedas** and **sastras** to secure muk  
 But superior to rites and ceremonies  
 Is the utterance of the Name  
 The most wicked sinners have been saved  
 By the Name

To utter the Name is to evoke an Idea and secure a link in the chain of harmony. But the name must be uttered with love. Meditation on the Name cannot draw us nearer the great Centre of Life if the heart lacks love. Meditation without love is empty. In a

deeper sense, indeed, meditation without love a spiritual impossibility. Who is there who will receive the "Treasure of His Name" in his Heart and not be stirred to the depths with love? Who will behold the lotus-feet of the Lord not fall down in reverent love?

In most moving strains do the Sikh hymns sing of love for the living Ideal:-

With clasped hands Nanak hath entered Thy sanctuary  
 O beloved Lord! Grant him salvation?  
 A fish out of water dies being separated from water;  
 How can I live without the Beloved?  
 The deer faces the arrow;  
 Alas! it sacrifices its life  
 While absorbed in the joy of listening to the hunter's call  
 Mine eye-lids close not;  
 I am absorbed in the love of the Dear one  
 My mind anxiously looketh for Him night and day  
 O Night! grow long as I love the Dear One  
 O Sleep! grow short that I may ever touch His feet

My soul and body feel love for the Beloved :

How shall my heart be satisfied without beholding Him?

I cannot abide for a moment without the lord.  
 I cry for Him as the *chatak* cries for water.  
 I wander searching for the fascinating One,  
 Mine eyes are dyed in the colour of the Beloved ;  
 They rest not even for a moment.  
 Separate from my Spouse  
 One moment appears to me as a day ;  
 Wandering and wandering  
 I weep and wring my hands.

Such love had the Gurus. Such love is sung in hymn after hymn of the *Sukhmani*. Years have passed away since my heart was knit to this great book. As a lisping child I listened to its simple verse. As a boy

without understanding much, I was strangely moved by its melody. In the growing years of my manhood, I have felt again and again that the Bhagvadgita and the Sukhmani<sup>c</sup> are two of the books which India's young men should study. They may well be read as text-books in Higher Nationalism. Indeed, some years ago when I was asked to recommend a text book in Religion for college students in Sind, I referred to the Sukhmani as one of the great books for India's young men. The message of this book is, I believe, for the Nations. The world has glorified imperialism and narrow nation-cults. Counsels of hate and strife are growing. The law of blood and death has been openly declared in Europe as the law of 'national' life. "Altruism", we have been unblushingly told, "is mob-egotism of the weak." ! Love and self-abnegation and humility have been condemned as "chandala (slave) morality" ! The 'civilised' world is in piteous need of a message of the Spirit. Such a message is sung in the Sukhmani. It speaks of the law of peace, not 'efficiency' and blood:---of spiritual idealism, not arrogant imperialism ; of the will-to-sacrifice, not the will-to-power; of the love which serves, not the power which appropriates and enslaves. Great is the Nation's agony to-day. And I would have India's young men so work and suffer for the cause of Indian freedom that a sceptic West may know that India is not dead but that the Mother still bears witness to the wisdom of the *Rishis* and the song of the *Gurus*.<sup>c</sup>

## THE MEANING OF KNOWLEDGE

*He knows the essence of the Vedas and the Scriptures, Sastras and Smritis, who sees the Sthula in the Sukhmani.*

The singer of the Sukhmani was a seer. And I have come across passages in his hymns profoundly philosophical. A great artist is a *thinker*; a great poet has in his mind a synthesis, a vision of the world-whole which philosophy seeks to interpret. Guru Arjun had a synthesis in his mind. Different aspects of the Synthesis are sung by him in different poems. I have been particularly struck with some which express the idea of *maya* and the meaning of knowledge. Here are two extracts:—

The player plays his part,  
And represents many Characters.  
"In a thousand water-pots  
There is one sky reflected.  
When the water-pots burst,  
The sky remains as before".

In these words we have a beautiful expression of the philosophical doctrine of *maya*. Macauliffe's volumes on "The Sikh Religion" give to the English reader much information concerning the Gurus. But Macauliffe's interpretation of the Sikh religion and the teaching

of the Gurus suffers from his anti-Hindu bias. It is an interpretation vitiated by his cult of 'loyalty.' "I have only quite recently met in Lahore young men," he writes, "claiming to be descendants of the Gurus who told me that they were Hindus." He adds: "Whether the object of their tutors and advisers was or was not to make them disloyal, such youths are ignorant of the Sikh religion and of its prophecies in favour of the English." The imperialist motive of Macauliffe spoils his publication. "I bring from the East," he writes, "what is practically an unknown religion." But this religion, the great religion of the Sikhs, is not antagonistic to Hinduism. The teachings of the Gurus move in an atmosphere in which the higher Hindu thought mingles with the Sufi spirit. As I have already observed, there are poems in the Sikh scriptures which express the doctrine of *maya*. This group may be called *maya*-poems. There are poems, again, which express the doctrine of knowledge. This group may be called *gnan*-poems. Two other groups, too, of *bhakti*-poems and *seva*-poems, may be noted. It is a popular misconception that the Way of Knowledge is not indicated in the Sikh scriptures. In Guru Arjun's hymns alone may be found passages glorifying knowledge. In one passage the devotee is asked to make knowledge his 'daily worship.' In another God himself is given the epithet: "The Saviour of Knowledge." And some of the most beautiful poems in the *Sukhmani* are those which sing of the *Brahmagnani*, the Knower of the Ideal. *Gnan*, *bhakti*, *karma*, all the three *margas* are

referred to in the Sukhmani. They are, in a sense not *three margas*. The *marga*, the Path, is one. These three are but three *sadhans*, three disciplines for the man who would tread the path. Gnan is often interpreted to mean *knowledge*. The question arises : What is knowledge ?

There are men who study human motives and organise interests, only to cut the throats of others. They may be clever men, 'efficient' men, successful men ; they are not men of 'Knowledge.' A scholar, again, is not necessarily a man of 'Knowledge.' In Sikh history we read of Bhai Budha. I would call him a man of Knowledge, yet he was 'uneducated.' He lived in the days of Guru Arjun. He had seen Guru Nanak. He lived in a quiet little cottage. This poor, simple old man had love in his heart. He was not a man of books. He read the scripture of his soul and he daily recited the Guru's song. Modest and devout, he spent the day in prayer and service. Guru Arjun was anxious to place his son under the training of a teacher. Who is more competent than Bhai Buddha ?—thought Guru Arjun. The Guru asked this simple old man to educate the boy. Bhai Buddha said :—" But I am myself uneducated." Then answered the Guru :—" But thou hast eloquence in thy heart ". The Guru announced to the Sikhs that he rejoiced to have Bhai Buddha as his son's teacher. And we read in the Sikh books that Bhai Buddha taught the Guru's son the Guru's hymns and several practical arts. The 'uneducated' Bhai Buddha was a man of knowledge.

for he had "eloquence" in his "heart". True knowledge is "eloquence of the heart". It is not mere information. It is a discipline, a sadhan which purifies. It is a power of the spirit. Emerson once criticised Englishmen on the ground that they "grovelled" before facts ! Mere facts do not constitute knowledge. True knowledge is a synthesis. And it is not estranged from the Ideal. Science which strangles the moral or spiritual may make a nation 'efficient' : it is not knowledge. Science does not fulfil its purpose unless it is used in the service of Humanity. And great searchers of science,—men like Darwin, Huxley, Tyndall, Spencer, Kelvin, Pasteur, Fabre, Einstein, Argabhatha, Sankara,—have been humanists, worshippers of the Ideal, seers of a synthesis without which it were difficult to understand the continuity of things. What is the mark of the man who has this knowledge ? An answer to this question is given us in the text of the Sukhmani : "He knows the essence of the Vedas, Sastras and Smritis, who sees the *sthula* in the *sukshama*". How can this be, you ask ? You understand, you say, that *sukshama* may be seen in the *sthula* ; but here the Teacher says something quite the reverse of it ; he asks us to see the *sthula* in the *sukshama* ! The saying is paradoxical ; but the world's great ones have spoken in paradoxes : "Rejoice through Renunciation" says a Upanishad : the saying is paradoxical but has in it a profound truth. "He that would gain his life must lose it" says Christ. Once again the words are a paradox, and half reveal,

half conceal, a precious truth. "Die to live" is the teaching uttered again and again by Hegel, the German thinker. To know is to see the *sthula* in the *sukshama*; '*sukshama*' is 'small', *sthula* is 'great'; and knowledge is vision of the great in the small. What an immense store of energy there is in radium! What a small thing is an ounce of matter! But, as Sir Oliver Lodge pointed out in an address on "Sources of Energy", if you take the energy contained in an ounce of matter and reckon the number of foot tons thereby obtained, you will find enough energy to raise the German navy and pile it on the top of a Scottish mountain! A drop of blood is so small; yet in it are many corpuscles which you may see under the microscope. Your body is so small; yet it is the battlefield of innumerable germs of life. Sankara or Shakespeare was only a few feet high in the body; but what power of the mind, what wisdom, was in each! A *sadhu* speaks a few words; you see him smile; you see him shed tears at the sad state of India; but what power is in those words and smiles and tears! The world as revealed by science and psychology is not a "world of prose." The 'gods' are not dead. There is the great in what seems to be small. The first sermon of Buddha had, we read, a most wonderful effect on the people; but Buddha spoke nothing; he stood up, holding in his hands an apple, and showed it to his audience! Buddha's presence was a sermon, more powerful than volumes of words. "But we are not as Buddha was the world's great ones have been" you will say. "How

are we," you will ask, "to see the great in the small?" Two points of practical value I may suggest in this connection. First let us see the Great One in the poor and weak. Every one of them is an image of the Master ; every one a form of the infinite Life ; and to serve them is to serve the Eternal. You see a little boy, a widow, a weak woman, a poor neighbour, a countryman in suffering, a victim of injustice ; what do you do to help them, to serve them, to make them happy, to rebuke the wrong, to struggle for truth, to vindicate their human claims ? Ignoring the teaching of her prophets, India became blind to the value of the individual ; India trampled upon the sanctity of human personality ; and our society, smitten with the sin of pride, became inefficient, and none is so poor and weak among the nations to-day as our India. Shall we not recognise the rights of India's women and children, the rights of all the classes called the 'depressed'? Shall we not pay homage to the infinite God in them ?

Secondly, see the infinitely Great in yourself. You are not the weak, poor creature you imagine yourself to be. In you are mighty powers ; for the Eternal has set Himself in your heart. Every one of us has hidden forces, has a hidden fire. I ask young men to kindle the fire in their hearts. It is the *agni-sacrament* of Fire. With the fire of faith in ourselves, let us stand up, unafraid, to do our duties, to rebuke the wrong, to publish not our poor selfish programmes but the purpose of the Master ; and conscious of our spiritual right, let us enter into the service of our Nation with the dignity of the Comrades of God.

## THE SEED THAT GROWS

*"The whole world pays homage to Knowers of the Eternal."* *Sukhmani.*

Between this teaching and history there is, apparently, a conflict. The Sikh Teacher says that Knowers of the Eternal are honoured by the whole world. Yet history shows that the world's prophets, reformers and patriots have been often persecuted. Demagogues enjoy popularity ; the patriots suffer. Guru Nanak himself was regarded as little better than a lunatic by his father. The applause of the crowd was not desired by him. Under a tree, or by the side of a brook, or sitting on a slab of stone, the great Guru gave his message, a world-message, to little groups, and passed on. I have seen a little spot in Sind where stands still the trunk of a tree under the shade of which according to a story, he once sat. The Great one blessed my native land, but spoke to small groups. Often a lonely man, accompanied by two dear disciples, he moved from place to place on his mission of help and healing. Not many realised his greatness. So also Chaitanya, the Teacher of Bengal moved among men not many of whom realised his greatness. Once

a number of men honoured him—when he was a professor. When he turned from philosophy to religion, when he became a knower, and therefore a lover of God, he was laughed at by the ‘intellectuals.’ Some drawn from the lower ranks clung to him. But how many understood him? “Where ought a man to live?” They asked him. And he said :—“Brindaban, the land of Braja where the *Rasa Play* was performed.” And over and over again he exclaimed :—“Let me go to Brindaban and serve Krishna in solitude.” So Jesus had but twelve disciples, though at one time multitudes followed him. And not many of the disciples, as it seems to me realised his greatness. One of them betrayed him for thirty pieces of silver. Most of them fell away from him one by one, till when he was led to the Cross, there was only one, his beloved John, to stand by him and receive the blessings of the Master in agony. Yet the *Sukhmani* says :—‘The whole world pays homage to Knowers of the Eternal’.

I believe that history is made by individuals more than by environment. If I did not believe so, my faith in the future of my country would suffer defeat. For India’s environment the modern environment built by the bureaucracy is most depressing. India must look for her salvation to individuals. Let each province, by its collective *karma*, throw up a few mighty-souled men, and India will stand erect, a Nation of the free. I believe with Edward Meyer that “history begins when individuality first appears as an active factor in

the life of a people." To Taine history was a "mechanical problem." To me history is a psychological problem. Progress must be interpreted not in terms of mind and character. Men of mind and character make history. Great men! I would rather use the word Great Souls: They are the makers of history. Emerson regarded 'great men' as 'representative'. This is true, perhaps, in regard to politicians and statesmen. It is seldom true with regard to prophets and patriots. They are often in advance of their people. They represent the times to come, the aspirations of a better society, not the wishes of a contemporary superficial order. They work to build a new order of things; and society often tries to keep them down; their environment tries to suppress them. The environment fails; for they are creative souls. Society does not succeed in its efforts; a Power is in these mighty men. Dishonoured and rejected they pass away, but their *shakti*, their *atmic* force, does not pass away. They leave behind them a seed which grows into a mighty tree where-of the shade is life and the leaves a healing to the multitudes. They do work not for immediate results. They do not ask for honor. They come to be honoured by the world some day after they have passed away. So it is that Nanak and Chaitanya and Jesus are honoured by the nations to-day. Knowers of the Eternal are honoured by the whole world. Kingdoms and dynasties come and go; but the kingdom of these mighty Teachers endures. We, too, are meant to be citizens of that

kingdom. Political or economic progress must not be divorced from the spiritual. And in us, too, lie mighty Powers—unexpressed; in us too is the Divinity, but it is imprisoned. Potential Christs and Buddhas and Nanaks and Chaitanyas are we. Let us stand up in our manhood to claim our rights as citizens of the kingdom of souls. Let us call from within our hidden Powers. Let us cleanse our hearts and co-operate with the *Atman*. The patriot is not the man who seeks titled greatness and contemporary praise. The patriot is a silent servant of his Nation. And the work of such a man becomes fruitful; for he co-operates with the Gods who work in silence for the healing of the Nations.

## THE SECRET OF NATIONAL GREATNESS

*"To find Beauty through Harinama is to attain to true greatness". Sukhmani.*

The beautiful is the great. That man, you say, is rich, has servants and houses ; does he impress you with being beautiful ? Does he carry a vision of Beauty in his heart ? If not, he is not truly great. There is the speaker addressing large crowds. You say he is great. But there is ambition (not the beautiful) in his heart. He is not great. You see a *sadhu*, a poet, a preacher ; they think or speak or sing of the Beauty that is God ; they have attained to greatness. In the measure that a man communes with the beautiful, in that measure is He great. This city, you say, is great. It is growing in commerce, industry, the externals of civilization. But is it becoming more and more beautiful ? Has it parks and museums, shrines of art and culture, temples of faith, and singers and seers of the Beautiful ? If not, the city is not really great.

What is true of individuals and cities is true of nations. A Nation's true greatness should be measured in terms not of its commerce but of its appreciation of those imponderables, those inner values, one of

which is beauty. The glory of Greece was its vision of the beautiful. That vision and the Christ-ideal have fought against the materialism and baptised barbarism of the West. Beauty has been the inspiration of Europe's art and literature and worship. Mrs. Browning revealed the inspiration of her poetry when in answer to a tender inquiry from her husband she said on her death bed—with her head on his cheek and a smile on her lips—"Beautiful I!" One of the conditions of a Nation's self-realisation is Beauty.

Are we losing beauty? In the measure that we are, we are losing freedom too. How may we, how may a Nation find beauty? "Through *Harinama*," says the Sukhmani. What is the significance of this complex word, *Harinama*? 'Hari' stands for the Infinite Living Ideal. 'Nama' means vibration. Things have their vibrations. Places have their vibrations. And I believe every man has his vibration; every man sounds a note of his own, a note expressive of his character. So many send out notes of discord and hate; only a few sound notes of truth and love and purify others by their presence and words. In the measure that a Nation in the different spheres of its life sounds vibrations of the Ideal may it become beautiful, become great. The science of a Nation, is it used for selfish ends? Then it becomes, as the World-War showed, a terrible power of destruction. Does it sound vibration of the good? Is it inspired by the Ideal? Then it becomes a building-power of civilization. The poli-

tics of a nation, do they move on a moral plane or are they opportunist, aggressive ? A Nation that does not subordinate its politics to moral laws may be efficient ; it is not beautiful ; and ' efficiency ' is ' not greatness. ' Efficient' nation must be cured of their disorders,—grab and greed. "To find Beauty through *Harinama* is to attain to true Greatness." *Harinama* is the power of ideal. It is *atma-shakti*. It is soul-force. That there is something in us besides muscle and mind-energy—that something which the scriptures call the *Atman*, the Soul—is the faith that modern civilization lacks. Therefore is modern life with all its paraphernalia of progress a poor, shrunken thing. Progress ? Efficiency ? Big motor cars ? Fast trains ? Many luxuries ? Mills, manufacturers, machinery ? But where—we ask in agony—where is the Soul ? The world needs not an efficient but a *beautiful* civilization. And a civilization is beautiful in the measure that it reflects the Soul of the people. If ancient India was a great Nation, it is because its economics, its politics, its education, its social life, its art and worship, its culture and civilization reflected the inner beauty of India's Soul. Ancient India had not the paraphernalia of modern civilization. It was a simpler civilization she evolved. But she was as great then as she is fallen to-day. Her civilization was simple but rich in treasures of the Soul. A Nation need not have the elaborate things of an external civilization to be happy or great. Denmark has not many large trains ; Denmark has not many fine roads such as Britain has built in India ; but Denmark

is a free nation, a great nation. And India is struggling yet to be free.

If the struggle is to be sustained to 'Victory, we must work from *within* outwards ; we must purify our hearts ; we must keep our souls beautiful through communion with the Ideal. May I suggest one method to young men, to those who would catch the higher vibrations I speak of, and grow in the beauty of the inner life ? That method is the practice of silence. Most of us live in a world of noises, excitements, sensations. Most of us mistake motion for advance, and bustle for progress. Let us enter, even if it be for a few minutes every day, into the world of silence. Pass into the silence of the Soul. Form small silence-groups. You have many leagues, associations, institutions, *samajas*; you need a *santi-samaj*, a league of Silence. At these silence-groups meet for a few minutes ; sit at the feet of the Lord and think of some beautiful saying or act of any one of the world's prophets, patriots, sages, seers, poets ; think of a *sloka* of the Upanishads, a text of the Gita or Sukhmani, a passage in Emerson or Browning or Plato or Mazzini. And when you sit in the silence-group, drive out all fear from your heart ; say to yourself : "I am a child of God, a son of Eternity." Then wait ; and you will catch the higher vibration ; the wisdom of the Spirit will touch you in silence.

There is a story of a musician who played upon his instrument at a bridge ; note after note did the musician sound with such art that the vibrations struck against the bridge, and broke it. You, too, may break

## THE SECRET OF NATIONAL GREATNESS 61

the many obstacles to India's progress, if you will cast out fear, and have faith in yourselves, and sound note after note of the great Ideal. Stand up in the dignity of your manhood—I say to young men ;—declare the divinity in you ; fill the land with the mighty vibrations of Truth and Love. And you will make India beautiful and great.

## WHO ARE THE PATRIOTS ?

*I have become fearless ; God has become my shelter,  
“ They are the real patriots who practise remembrance.”  
Sukhmani.*

Indian politics were long dominated by Western methods and mentality. Indian politics moved in an atmosphere, not irreligious but *a-religious*. And I know that many young men even to-day think there is no connection between Nation-service and Religion. A politician who opposed Non-co-operation and at the same time believed in violence once attacked me for introducing ‘ religion ’ into ‘ politics.’ Politics is politics, say many : And I have heard a number of my country-men quote with approval the view of some western writers that private vices matter little if man has ‘ public virtues.’ Some, indeed, point to public men whose private lives are immoral but who are, notwithstanding, reckoned ‘ patriots ’. It does seem that Nation-service and Religion have little in common one with the other! But what is the witness of history ?

I see the spirit of religion in every one who is a worshipper of an ideal. A patriot worships some ideal of which his country is to him, in some measure,

a symbol. Therefore in his heart his country is idealised, immortalised. That ideal he adores, and so has faith in his country's future. That ideal he sees insulted by the conqueror of his country—and there is agony in his heart. A patriot is an ideal-worshipper, and is therein distinguished from an opportunist politician. Ideal-worship gives him courage, makes him fearless. His resistance to government is born of reverence for the moral law. His disobedience to the spirit is due to obedience to a higher law. Such civil disobedience was practised by Guru Arjun when Raja Birbal of Akbar's days imposed a tax on his temple. The Guru refused to pay the tax ! The temple was a house of God. Raja Birbal sent soldiers ordering him to pay the tax. The Guru said he would not pay the tax, and he sent the following reply :—" The Government must not impose forced labour or taxes on the Guru's house. I keep an open kitchen ; I keep it with the offerings of Sikhs and saints. None is refused access to it. Take the corn and food you may need. But I can give no money. I live by faith in God." The soldiers returned to the Guru summoning him to Raja Birbal and reporting to him the Raja's order :—" If thou comest to meet me, well ;—else I shall sack Amritsar." Calmly the Guru sent his reply. " My friends ! I fear no one. The Creator will protect me ". Such fearlessness.—A mark of the patriot—grows out of the faith : " The Creator will protect me." With that faith, Sikh boys and young men and women went forth to bear witness to the Gurus, in the face of

sufferings and torture, many a time ; in the face of death. To a soldier, Guru Arjun said : " A soldier's merit is, never to show his back to the enemy." And the Sikh soldiers who fought for freedom in those days of India's peril did not " show their backs to the enemy "; for they believed profoundly : " The Creator will protect me."

I will not generalise ; but I think it is safe to say that the world's great patriots have been men imbued with the spirit of religion. They have been ideal-worshippers. Solon and Socrates and the heroes of Thermopylae were among the patriots of Greece. They were religious. Mazzini, the Italian patriot, repeatedly urged his people to develop a sense of the Unseen if they wished to be free. Washington, the man who made America free, was religious. Lincoln, who brought America safe out of the struggle against Negro slavery, had the true sense of religion. Asked why he was so eager to abolish slavery, he said : " I have promised my God." The builders of Indian civilization have been religious. Asoka and Akbar and Sivaji, three of the biggest personages in our political history, had a well-developed sense of religion.

It is my faith that the Saviour of the Nations is the Eternal. He is the real Worker. A true patriot never thinks of *himself* as a nation-builder. The Builder is the Master. A patriot is like the post-office ! He enters into the soul of his people, realises their needs, listens to their anguished hearts, and he, as

the post-office passes on letters, he, the patriot, passes on to God the needs of his people, carrying to Him the story of their sufferings, and asking Him to help the Nation. The patriot worships the ideal, "practises remembrance", in the daily affairs of his life. He has the conviction that the World-Spirit is the Leader of the people. Therefore he believes that his country will win the fight for freedom.

To be a patriot, then, is not to seek personal greatness, to hunt after 'honours', to desire to be pushed into the councillor's seat or the chair of a political conference. To be a patriot is to be a *sadhan*, a servant of the Nation, a worshipper of the ideal ; to breathe out thoughts and prayers for the people, to remember the Nation before God. When Hernert, a Frenchman, waived aside his claims to the Nobel Prize in Literature in favour of Bourguet, the reason he gave was that he acknowledged Bourguet as his superior : And why ? —Hernert had been taught by a study of Bourguet's philosophical works how to rise from passion to thought. The true patriot, the *deshbhakta*, as I think of him, repudiates the politics of passion. His is the politics of service. His is the realisation that a Nation is greatly served by those who rise from passion to thought and love. And this is to "practise remembrance", —to rise from passion to thought and love. Such a patriot, the man who rises from passion to thought and love, will not entangle the Ideal in a narrow Nation-cult. He will love his country ; he will also pay homage to Humanity. His struggle for

national freedom will be inspired by the idea that Humanity demands the freedom of his Nation. For only a free Nation may be a servant of Humanity. In the theology of the Negro, we are told, Nsame, the Creator God, taught the Negroes that it was wicked to steal within the tribe. The negro's 'tribalism' has grown to day into 'nationalism.' Nationalism must deepen into Humanism ; and the thought must grow upon the nations that "it is wicked to steal" within Humanity. A patriot who "practises remembrance" is loyal to his Nation, not by being unjust to other Nations, but because he would be a servant of Humanity, His Nation is to him a limb of Humanity. To resist the wrong done to his Nation is, he understands, to guard the health and happiness of Humanity.

The 'remembrance' referred to in the Sukhmani is of the ideal, and therefore, also, of oneself. Most of us do not remember ourselves and that kingdom of Souls whence we come. We think we are poor and weak and can do nothing. We have forgotten ourselves, forgotten our *real* selves. Our deepest selves are hid in the World-Heart. We have but to remember who we are in order to realise our duties and responsibilities at this hour of India's need. We are sons of the sages of the East. We are inheritors of an ancient culture. If we be true to the Indian ideal, and trust the leading of the star of our own destiny, not stand as beggars craving for foreign favours ; if we but look for help and strength to the Spirit of our history, we shall, I feel sure, make India great again among the Nations. We shall make Her free.

## THE VISION UNIVERSAL

*All Countries (Nations) are of God*—Sukhmani.

I believe profoundly that a cult of hate or violence, if it dominates the country's counsels, will become the funeral pyre of the present *Swaraj* movement. Freedom will not perish, but the present struggle will ; and the hope of India will be postponed, if counsels of hate and passion prevail.

It is easy for many of my countrymen to hate the Englishman when the Indian Government believes in violence and pursues a policy of repression. Nothing sounds simpler to the average man than this,--violence must be met with counter-violence. A policy of repression incites violence of thought, word and action. We know of its effects in Ireland. Sinn Fein's programme was at first one of passive resistance. But the policy of the British Government suggested physical force ; passive resistance was abandoned in favour of the "activism" of the "Irish rebels". "The rebel organisation," writes a recent interpreter of Irish Nationalism, "had a considerable measure of moral support and sympathy, whereas the police (of the Government) were the objects of universal detestation". Under similar circumstances hate and violence develop-

ed in Egypt. Repression led to riots ; riots were ' suppressed ' by force, and there were hangings of Egyptians in Alexandria. According to one report seven Egyptians were selected at random from a crowd to be condemned to the gallows ! Several young Egyptians are to-day in jail, undergoing rigorous imprisonments varying from three to fifteen years. Their sin ? ' Sedition ' ! I call it ' patriotism.' Brilliant college students have been sentenced to long terms of penal servitude, and have gone to jail with bold, firm steps cheering their beloved country. A similar situation is developing in this country. Young men in different parts of the country—Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, have gone to jail amid cries of *Sat Sri Akal, Bharat Mata Ki Jai*, "Allaho-Akbar" "*Bande Mataram*" "*Hindu-Musalmān Ki Jai*." A ' resolute ' Government, believing in physical force is freely using the weapon of repression. Will my countrymen be tempted to give up self-control and meet with hate and physical force the challenge of the present situation ?

The situation is, I think, more serious than it was even in the days of the Mutiny. It was largely a Sepoys' protest in 1857. To-day we are face to face with a people's protest, a mighty Protest of India's millions belonging to different communities, classes and creeds. The masses and many of the English-educated classes, no longer believe in ' blessings ' of the British *raj*. Bishop Weldon was for some time the Metropolitan of Calcutta. He is now the Dean of Durham. In the course of an interview by an English paper he

said:—"It was the British Government of India which gave India the best chance of development", If he would visit India to-day and ask the people *their* opinion of British Government, the majority of them would tell him they regard it as standing in the way of India's development. I have tried to study the matter as impartially as I am Indian can ; I feel that while at one period in our history , an 'efficient' bureaucracy was a necessary evil to bring India out of chaos and give her back the peace and order without which a Nation may not grow, the bureaucracy is without any justification to-day. The bureaucracy has overstayed its time. It has weighed heavily upon the Nation's masculine personality. The bureaucracy must go. And the empire-cult, what of it ? In his book, "A Short History of the British Commonwealth," Professor Ramsay Muir speaks of the British Empire, "as a wonderful partnership or fellowship of peoples." I confess I see in India much to remind me of the "ruling race," little to suggest "fellowship !" And when Professor Ramsay Muir says, "The most distinctive note" of the "Empire" is "to cultivate unity without sacrificing freedom," I ask myself :—What good did his visit to India do to the learned professor ? In India "distinctive notes" of the "Empire" are these two, insolence and exploitation. It is easy to understand the empire-patriotism of the Dominions. The Prince of Wales rightly interpreted it as "loyalty to their British institutions" But India is not a Dominion. India is a servile state, and "British institutions" do

not belong to India as they do to the Dominions united to Britain by blood, by a common culture expressed in a common language, a common religion and common customs. India's natural loyalty can only be to her own institutions, her own culture, her own interests, her own ideals. The National movement in the East is an effort of Asian Life to return to itself. Therefore does Egypt claim independence. Therefore does Islam claim her heritage and protest against the Treaty of Sevres. Therefore does India demand *Swaraj*. And when the Government meets the will-to-freedom with physical force, is it a wonder many young men, to-day, hate the British and think of violence as the only way to liberate India ? Yet hatred means atheism, violence means confusion.' Europe threw herself into that confusion in the world-war. Europe lies exhausted to-day. The Nations of the West have from time to time gone the way of violence : with what result ? European civilization lies bleeding. Captain Edward Gill said : " I have learned one lesson as a result of this War. War does not settle anything. The lesson for us is this :—we have failed to win the ideal that we thought could be won by the use of force. We have to turn to other weapons." At a time when some in Europe and America have begun to see the folly of physical force, should the young men of India—a Nation strong in the power of immaterialism—make use of the weapons of hatred and violence ? Yet, as I have said more than once, we want a re-volution, re-evolution, in India. A bloodless revolution, a creative revolution'—that to my

mind, is India's need. It may not be achieved without a prolonged struggle. No Nation can afford to defy the Law of Karma. The pace may be 'should' be, quickened ; it must not be *forced*. To, force it may beget egotism and produce confusion when we need humility and self-discipline. For the Master-BUILDER of *Swaraj* is Ishwara Himself. And my prayer has been, *not* : "We shall have *Swaraj* this month or the next," but : "Thy will be done !" And His Will, I believe, will be done in the day that world-forces co-operate with India to make Her free, Who shapes the world-forces ? Ishwara, the Logos. And if not a sparrow falleth without His Will, am I wrong in thinking that the Nation will be free in the day He says : "Let India be free," To force the pace may produce reaction.

Which is nobler for India,---to surrender herself to hatred and passion, or to be true to her spiritual idealism, though the days darken round her ? Great is the world-agony to-day ; but I see its cure, as I see India's salvation, in spiritual idealism. The truth the Guru taught needs to be re-affirmed to day when narrow nationalisms are fiercer than, perhaps, even before. "All Nations are of God." Humanity is divine. You will not solve freedom's problem without the strength which comes of spiritual idealism. Nation-cults may mean growth in commerce and industry ; they also mean decay in art and culture and civilization, and National life languishes when not reinforced by love of humanity.

But this idealism, I am told, will not work unless there be a transformation of the human race. This idealism, I plead, is *practical*; for hatred of a people or race is something foreign to the human heart. We may conceive hatred in thought, but the heart refuses to receive it. It is the *human heart* we must touch in order to achieve our freedom. A propaganda, therefore, which stirs up passion among the masses or provokes the antagonism of other nations to India's claims will not help us in the struggle of to-day. A propaganda of *knowledge* will help us. The world does not yet *know* India; the masses do not know Her; not many of *us* know Her yet. To know Her is to understand the great ideal that she has adored through the struggles and sufferings of centuries. To know Her is to be an idealist. If we would but know what She stands for in the economy of the nations, we would learn to be self-reliant and reverent, manly and humble, self-controlled and strong in the only power which prevails, the power of idealism. For idealism is creative. It builds, where hate and passion destroy. It is the power of co-operation with the world-will. It is the power which disciplines men in the service of Humanity. When this power comes to birth in Indian politics, when it is recovered in the life of the village folk, we then may hope to make a real history of India in the struggle and sufferings of to-day. And a western sage of later days then may ponder how imperialism that rose on the ruins of an ancient nation crumbled to its fall when India to her own self was true.

## THE SIKH TYPE

Individuality and efficiency are two of the qualities which the modern type of life has emphasised; but with many these are only an excuse for a cult of egoism and exploitation. The Sikh type of character was conspicuous for qualities which have, I believe, a great value for us to-day. The Sikhs formed a community whose nationalism grew out of Religion. Most of the Sikhs were drawn, I believe, from the peasant class, and there was in the Sikh life in the day of the earlier Gurus much of the poetry of the peasant. They lived a simple life. They recognised no class distinctions. Devotion to the Guru was their strong point. That devotion became the parent of a mighty national movement much more fruitful than has, so far, been the national movement of to-day. The Sikhs had a true democratic consciousness. The Guru was a servant of the community. And how spontaneously the Sikhs obeyed their Gurus ! Tocqueville's generalisation that democracies are often ungrateful was not true of the Sikh democracy. The Guru was a chosen leader of the democracy. The Sikh had reverence for him; but the Sikhs did not *worship* him. Above the Guru, they recognised, was God. Early

rising was a practice of the Sikhs. Early rising does good, I believe, to the body and gives a tone to the mind. *Asadiwar* was recited at dawn. Not men only, but also women and children, had to get up early and begin the day's work with the singing of hymns. These spiritual exercises nourished the Sikh community and were continued even in the days when the community became, under the inspired leadership of the tenth Guru, a commonwealth. Sikh character was formed by certain spiritual values. One of them was humility. Sikh hymns are charged with the aroma of this aspiration to practise humility in daily life. Here is a prayer associated with the name of Guru Nanak :

I made many efforts ;  
 But the pride of my heart was not broken  
 Nanak : by hard-heartedness I was fettered ;  
 Save me, O Lord !

In a hymn composed by Guru Arjun we read :

I am full of demerits ;  
 I have no merit ;  
 Yet Thou Thyself hast compassion on me.

That humility is strength is an idea indicated in another beautiful hymn :

Humility is my mace,  
 And being the dust of all men's feet  
 Is my two-edged sword.  
 These no evil-workers can withstand.

So when, at Mecca, Guru Nanak was asked by a Muslim Kazi how man was to please Allah, he said : "By Humility and prayer," And over and over again the Guru's hymns utter the phrase : "I am the dust of the feet of Thy servants." In their actions and utterances,

the Gurus showed to the Sikhs the important place of humility in a programme for the discipline of life. When it was resolved to build the temple, Har Mandir, the Sikhs said to Guru Arjun with a feeling of natural pride : "The temple, Sire, should be built higher than the other buildings." But the Guru calmly answered :

What is humble shall be exalted.  
The branches of a fruit-laden tree  
Bend low to the earth  
Let us build the temple  
Lower than all !

And this temple has, indeed, been exalted. It is to-day, the famous Golden Temple of Amritsar ! Guru Amar Das, too, was pattern of humility. One day he was kicked off his seat by a young man. The Guru's calm reply was : "Forgive me, sir! My old bones must have hurt your tender foot !" Neither Greece nor Rome, it seems to me, realised the value of humility for moral progress. And humility is not a virtue that Aristotle mentions in his list. The modern revival of 'naturalism' in ethics does not recognise humility as a virtue. Modern life glorifies the cult of the ego. The dominating civilization of to-day worships efficiency as its God. Bacon was not a man who had humility in his heart : but Bacon expressed a profound truth when he said in his great book " Novum Oragnum," that none could enter into the Kingdom of Science except he became as a little child. What is true of the Kingdom of Science is true, also, of the Moral kingdom. And if we would help the National

movement to-day, we should work in a spirit of deep humility. Let courage join hands with humility in the present struggle for freedom. In the measure in which our "nationalism" looks down upon other nations, it misses its destiny, in the measure in which we nourish in our hearts hate for the 'stranger' we weaken the movement. For freedom will not be won until we work like the Sikhs of old, as comrades of God. The feeling of God with-us will purify us, will give us the strength we need to sustain the struggle to victory. Well did Guru Arjun declare when the Golden Temple was built :

God Himself did come ;  
 He stood up to do the work  
 Of His Bhaktas.  
 On this beautiful spot,  
 In this beautiful temple-tank  
 He poured Himself  
 His nectar of water !

Humility is the parent of tenderness. And the Sikh books record several stories of the tender regard the Gurus and their dear disciples had for others. "Tenderness" was the motto of Guru Har Rai. One of his sayings is :—"Be tender to all things, even to flowers". Seeing a flower crushed at his feet, his eyes were touched with tears !

Humility and tenderness seek a spontaneous expression in service. And the Sikh community developed a wonderful spirit of service *tahal, seva*. To a big official, Guru Arjun said : " Be the dust of the feet of poor travellers." In one of his most moving prayers

Guru Ram Das says : " I shall pull the *punkha* and I shall draw water, and I shall eat what Thou wilt give me." The Sikh books give the story of a thief who was served so well by a Sikh family that he repented of his crimes and sought Sikh rites at the Guru's hands. Sikh girls and women, too, grew into an atmosphere of service. We read in the books of a Guru's daughter, being offered money by a Sikh disciple to get dresses and ornaments. The girl did not accept the money. The best use of money, she said, was to serve the poor ! The spirit of service rises above the limit-lines of caste and creed ; and the Sikhs learnt in the School of Service the great lesson of Human Brother-hood. A Sikh gave water to some Muslims and was accused of helping men of another faith. He was brought before the Guru to explain his conduct. His answer was brief and beautiful : " I give water to all," he said, " for the one Spirit is in all." The Guru was so pleased that he embraced him and blessed him. " The one Spirit is in all." And therefore to give anything to another in the spirit of service is really to give it to the Lord ! The man who has glimpsed the beauty of this truth concerning the One-in-all may well exclaim with Guru Nanak : " There is no Hindu : there is no Mussulman." Of the four portals to the Golden Temple, Amritsar, one is meant specially for the Mohammedan, as the other three are meant specially for Hindus, Sikhs and Christians, respectively. Why cannot the world's religions unite in the one service of Humanity ? \*

Humility, tenderness, *seva*, were no "slave virtues" with the Sikh community. The Sikhs did not become feeble for having these virtues. The Sikhs developed into a manly community. Humility, tenderness, *seva*, are really virtues not of the weak but of the strong. The Sikh code of courage and honour was a natural expression of these virtues of the strong. In a sanctuary of the Golden Temple,—the *Akal Bhunga* or the "Lodge Immortal"—may be seen the arms of Guru Gobind Singh. Well may a grateful nation preserve in the temple, the arms with which the warrior-saint fought freedom's battles over two centuries ago. The Guru had humility in his heart and, therefore, had the strength to fight for India's honour and faith. The Sikhs of the days of which I speak moved in an atmosphere not of a 'slave-morality' but of a morality of sacrifice. Centres of freedom, "in the noblest sense of that word," were the Guru's temples. Sikh boys and girls moved in a purifying atmosphere. To-day most of our children are trained to be little better than materialists;—job-seekers, honour-hunters. The child is the father of the Nation. Change the character of the children and you change the character of the Nation. Sikh children had to go to the temple, and their plastic minds received impressions which deepened into habits and character. I read with tears in my eyes the stories of Sikh boys and young men and women who suffered for the faith in them. The stories move me much : they do not surprise me. Nothing less could

be expected of persons who, as boys or girls, were brought up in homes or temples pervaded by an atmosphere of humility and service. Guru Gobind Singh's four sons were bricked up alive: but they did not for a moment, falter in their faith. About three hundred Sikh women of Lahore were arrested by the Government of those days. The women were kept on starvation diet; but they would not renounce their faith. "God will shield us" they said, and as they went on grinding corn in the prison-house, they sang the songs of the Gurus! Their children were killed in their presence; they themselves were threatened with execution; but they would not renounce their faith! When a famous Sikh temple was attacked, about three hundred Sikh women formed a band of volunteers and marched in faith to save the temple! One of the most moving stories I have read is that of Bibi Saran Kaur, a brave Sikh woman! She goes to the plain of Chaukaur. A battle has been fought and the plain is covered with dead bodies. The Sikh lady is anxious to honour the Sikh dead. She moves about the plain taking up the Sikh bodies. "My brothers in the Guru", she says as she looks at the Sikh dead. And her "brothers in the Guru" though dead must not be dishonoured. She must give them the last rites befitting the men who died for their faith. She makes a pile of leaves and twigs and wood. She looks at the dead. She invokes the blessings of the Sikh martyrs and the Gurus. She prays to God. She sets the pile on fire. On the battlefield the Sikhs had

fought against the Government. Some of the soldiers of the Government see the blaze at a distance. They come to the place where the pile is on fire to receive the dead. They are angry with Bibi Kaur. She is silent. They threaten her. She is silent. They throw her into the flames. She is silent ! She must do service to the dead, though she perish in the flames !

Nietzsche started a theory that humility, tenderness, service and kindred virtues were 'slave virtues.' The theory is refuted by Sikh history. Humility and kindred virtues gave a new strength to the Sikhs, made the Sikhs brave, and educated them for that Nation-service which is the crowning glory of the Sikhs who fought and died for freedom under the leadership of their last Guru. It could be no "slave morality" which inspired deeds of "sacrifice"—the dead which give a deathless value to Sikh history. Sikh morality was the morality of men and women who could be disciples of liberty. Its inspiration was the Ideal incarnated in the great Gurus and martyrs and sung in that noble hymn which expresses a spirit nobler, to my mind, than that of the noblest stories of Greece and Rome :

I am a Sacrifice to Thee

Eternal Verity ;

## SIKHISM AND SWARAJ

Each generation has its task. That of the present is, I believe, to win freedom for this country. India's history may help us not a little to understand the spirit in which we may take up the task to-day. Three of the most thrilling chapters in Indian history are those which tell of how the Rajput, the Marahatta and the Sikh carried on the struggle for freedom—and won. I am here concerned with the Sikh; and I wish to indicate what I believe to be the value of the Sikh message to us who are faced with the task of winning Freedom against great forces.

To read Sikh history is to understand that the Sikh did not enter upon their historical mission without going through a period of preparation. A succession of great souls—the Guru's—for almost a century helped the Sikh to organise themselves into a strong community able to win victory against a great power. A period of preparation is essential to the winning of freedom. We must not hope for a sudden miraculous coming of *swaraj*. Miracles occur in the inner realm of morals and the soul, but they do not appear on the stream of history. Something incalculable, it is true,

appears again and again ; but it can only help us in the measure in which we can put ourselves in right relations with it. The incalculable is of the spirit of history ; it will hardly be accurate to call it super-historical ; and it helps a Nation in the measure in which it co-operates with it. India will, I believe, achieve freedom not in defiance of, not in isolation from, but in co-operation with world-forces. The world-forces may break in upon us sooner than we anticipate ; but if they find us unprepared, freedom will still be far from us. We have spent thirty years and more in agitation.' We have followed methods of impressionism. I believe the imperative need of the Nation is self-organisation. This demands arduous and austere preparation. The Sikhs went through such preparation under the guidance of the great Gurus. And in the story of their struggle with Government I have not come across incidents such as have disfigured our present National movement from time to time, Chauri Chaura tragedies took place, but their author was the Government of the day, not the Sikhs. It was the privilege of the Sikhs to suffer.

Emotion played no small part in the formation of the Sikh life. But the Sikh movement was not merely a movement of feeling. It was, as it seems to me, a movement essentially of discipline. And common men and women were moulded into a community of martyrs. The Sikhs won not by force of numbers but by force of character ; And it is my faith that India will achieve her freedom by the same force,

*Swaraj asrams* in each village, little groups of earnest men filled with the *swaraj*-ideal, will achieve much, when big Committees of men moved by ambition and hatred will only throw the village life into confusion. The Sikhs fought in the faith that only the upright can win. If that faith grew upon us to-day, we would know that the unrest will not be removed by some Round Table Conference or some concessions or reforms snatched from the ruling power in the Councils. The cause of this unrest is the creative spirit of freedom. There is a God in this great struggle; and your reforms and compromises will not satisfy Him!

The Sikh movement, the Gurus understood, must not become sectarian. They believed profoundly that Hindus and Muslims were meant not to be enemies but common comrades in the one service of Man. "We are neither Hindus nor Mussulmans," said Guru Arjun. The Gurus indeed wished to belong to both. The Muslim word *Allah* was introduced by them in the scriptures. "We have," said Guru Arjun, "dedicated our bodies and souls to Allah." Some of the Gurus even dressed themselves as Muslim fakirs. In some old pictures the Gurus are represented as having rosaries in their hands. Guru Gobind Singh took into his service five hundred Muslim horsemen dismissed by the Moghuls. Dr. Trumpp combats the view that Guru Nanak wished to unite Hindus and Muslims. I regard Guru Nanak as our earliest prophet of Hindu-Muslim unity. To me Dr. Trumpp's view appears as misleading as that

other one set forth by an English apologist of Islam, according to whom the religion of Guru Nanak might almost be spoken of "as the religion of a Mahommedan sect!" The religion of Guru Nanak, as I understand it, was essentially a religion of harmony. And he saw, as not many Hindus have seen, the true greatness of Islam. He was in tune with the spirit of the Sufi. And, in one of the hymns in the Granth Sahib we have the significant declaration:—

The True One is found by Sufis  
They keep fast His Court

"Allah" said Guru Nanak to Mian Mitha, "is the one Great Name." According to a story, Nanak met Farid. The Muslim saint greeted Nanak with the word:—"Allah! Allah! O Darvesh;" To this Nanak replied:—"Allah is the object of my efforts, O Farid! Come! Sheik Farid! Allah, Allah, is my object." And what a beautiful interpretation of the spirit of Islam is given us in the following discourse of Guru Nanak to a *kazi*:

The true Muslim clears away self;  
He has sincerity and patience;  
He has purity of speech;  
He does not harm others;  
Such a Muslim, indeed, goes to Heaven;

It is regrettable that many Hindus did not appreciate the Guru's sympathy with the spirit of Islam. According to a story, Hindus of one place applied cow-dung to every spot on which the Guru had stood during his visit to that place! The Hindus of that place thought the spots had become polluted.

The Gurus were glad of association with Muslim Fakirs. Sheik Farid travelled with Guru Nanak for ten years and taught the people of the 'way of Allah'. The Gurus were prophets of universal brotherhood. They did not observe rules of caste. "Do not be proud of your caste", said Guru Nanak, "all men talk of four *varnas*. But the whole creation germinated out of one Brahma". On another occasion he said : "To him whose delusion of the heart is gone, Hindu and Mussulman are the same." And as long as this 'delusion' persists we may not hope to win freedom. India's freedom will be won and retained when we are filled with the faith that we all, Hindus and Muslims, 'twice-born' and 'sudras' men and women of diverse castes and creeds--are children of the one Mother, *Bharat Mata*. Worship of the Mother (*Bande Mataram* :) is meaningless if we repudiate any of the Mother's children.

The Sikh movement was profoundly democratic. In the Gurus India found leaders who regarded themselves as servants of God and the people. The very first Guru's successor was not the Guru's son but a devout disciple, Angad ; And Guru Angad organised Sikh *sangats* whose collective wisdom gradually shaped the community. It was Guru Tegh Bahadur who said : "The Guru and the *sangat* are like the warp and woof in cloth ; there is no difference between them." Chandu, the Finance Minister, offered his daughter to Guru Arjun's son. The Guru's Sikhs were not for a match between the two, for Chandu had abused the

Guru Chandu's wife was anxious to see her daughter betrothed to the Guru's son. Chandu sent a man to the Guru ; later he sent a letter pressing the Guru to give consent. The Guru respected the wishes of the Sikhs and rejected Chandu's offer. In reply to Chandu's letter, the Guru wrote :—" They whom the Creator hath joined are united. They whom man hath joined are not. It is the Guru's rule to comply with the wishes of his Sikhs. What they once reject, it is not proper again to accept." The political constitution developed by the Sikhs was essentially democratic. All the Sikhs were *bhais*, and the Raja or Maharaja was elected. It is foolish to say that democracy was unknown to India. It was the Aryan who evolved the first democratic form, the *panchayat* or village self-government. Aryans, Arabs and Celts were democratic.

The Sikh *Sangat* was a spiritual democracy. Some of the Gurus maintained a public refectory at which persons dined, as they do at Puri to-day, without the least distinction of caste. The leaders of the *Sanga* were the Gurus, and their lives were simple. Guru Angad earned his livelihood by twisting twine into rope ; and Guru Gobind Singh received his baptism at the hands of the five disciples whom he called the *Panch Pyaras*. Indeed, Guru Gobind Singh taught that where five Singhs were assembled, there the Guru was present also. The Sikh *Sangat* combined spiritual culture with labour. It was a spiritual democracy, I said. The Sikhs recognised absolute

loyalty to no earthly sovereign ; their loyalty was conditional ; for above the sovereign was God. Mr. Macauliffe does injustice to the essential spirit of Sikhism when he says that "without State support" Sikhism will be "lost in the general chaos of Indian religious systems" A bureaucratic State, such as we have in India is alien to the Sikh ideal of a spiritual democracy.

Sikhism spread to villages. It became a mass movement. Guru Nanak travelled far and wide and carried his message to the simple village-folk. The National movement of to-day has a future in the measure in which it is inspired by a lofty moral ideal and becomes, in a larger measure than it is to-day, a Mass-movement. The spiritual message of freedom has not yet touched many Indian villages. To spread the message to the villages, men are needed, men with a real love for the peasant and a genuine desire to educate the village-folk. National movement, to be fruitful, must not exhaust itself in mere agitation. It must spread its message through national institutions, a national press and national literature. Guru Nanak understood the value of educating the group-mind, the mass-mind, through education and *sadhsang*. He asked the Sikhs to open schools in villages and the *sadhsang* classes grew into what now are named the *Khalsa Diwans*. I believe profoundly that character is largely made by environment and education ; and those who would help in making India a Free State must do what they can to secure for the villagers a better

environment and education. The villager must have two full meals a day. He must also, have the education which will enrich his mind and train his emotions and will for the service of India. The bureaucratic Government spends huge amounts for the army in order to keep power in its hands. The masses have been cruelly neglected. It is for lovers of freedom to come to the help of the villager,—the peasant, the labourer, the 'outcaste'. The National movement must become a mass-movement ; a new love for the masses must be born in the heart of Young India. The Sikh Gurus had great love for the peasant and the so-called lower classes. In the Granth Sahib were brought together hymns of Kabir, a poor weaver; Nam Dev, a calico-printer ; Sain, a barber ; Ravidas, a shoe-maker. And Guru Nanak—a great lover of the poor said : " I shall go with the lowest among the low classes. What have I to do with the great? God's Eye of mercy rests on those who serve the the lowly." The *swaraj* movement of to-day will, I believe, draw its strength more and more from the masses. Therefore I plead with Young India, to open *swaraj ashramas* in the villages and take to peasants and labourers the message of freedom.

The Sikh movement was in its inspiration spiritual and therefore, in a deeper sense, National." Mr. H. A. Rose, referring to Guru Nanak says : " His teaching had no political aims." That is true. But it is equally true that the Guru's teaching had a message for the Nation; and out of it developed, under pressure

of circumstances, a political movement. The century struggle of the Sikhs, from the days of Guru Arjun Dev to those of guru Gobind Singh, was politico-religious and grew out of that love for the people and freedom which made it profoundly National. The *Jamnasakhi* tells us how Guru Nanak, surveying the state of India, exclaimed in agony of heart : "I weep in sorrow : how shall deliverance be obtained ?" Guru Nanak was a mystic, but his mysticism was of the *social* type. In a most moving hymn, the Guru says :—

Let yogis practise yoga,  
Let gluttons have gluttony,  
Let men bathe at places of pilgrimage,  
But let me listen to Thy Songs O Beloved !  
If some will sit  
And sing them to me

He listened to the Songs of the Beloved only to re-sing them for the service of man. "I have settled in the Silent City", he said. But he moved out much to give to others something of the wisdom given to settlers in "the Silent City." Religion is like tea, erroneously said a Japanese agnostic. To the Gurus religion was the very salt of life. And I have often urged that the *Swaraj* movement will not achieve freedom if it be not charged with a truly spiritual motive. I do not see yet the dawn of an era of freedom in this country ; for our politics have not yet been spiritualised. Spiritual values will save and strengthen the movement of freedom. What India needs is not only a new mind but also, primarily, a new heart. Without a new heart a

man may be a great politician, he will not be a servant of the Nation.

The sense of religion puts vitality into the frame of even a feeble man. The development of the sense of religion made the Sikhs a most vital community. The history of the Sikh faith from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century is full of illustrations of the vitality of religious idealism. Suffering weakens a man without faith ; suffering strengthens a man who worships an ideal. The Sikhs were all the better, purer, stronger, richer in faith and character, for their training in a school of danger and sacrifice. The hearts and minds of Sikh men and women were revolutionised by the power of faith. And as I have read story after story of the Sikh martyrs, I have marvelled that the frail little bodies of boys and women could suffer so much. The Sikh 'faith of the sword' was faith in sacrifice. It shaped the mind and heart of the community. There was a time when a price was set on the head of every Sikh, man or woman. It was in this school of danger that the Sikh built up his moral strength. He met the challenge of the government of his day with moral idealism. Guru Arjun had taught the Sikhs the great attitude :—"Accept death and renounce hope of life." Guru Gobind Singh gave them pahul, the " baptism of dagger." He taught them that every "son of Gobind Singh"—and he claimed them all as his sons—must be a true *kshatrya*. In the eighteenth century Sikh heads were supplied to Government in abundance, the price on each head varying from five rupees to twentyfive.

The persecutions only added to the strength of the Sikhs. The disciples asked Guru Amerdas what they should do in the face of persecution and the Guru said :—"Endure the wrong. It is nobler to submit than to resent." This is the teaching we also need at this hour of our trial. One Guru after another showed to the Sikhs what it was to "Endure the wrong," "to submit," not to "resent." One Guru after another died a witness to the religion of sacrifice. What a moving story is told us in Sikh books of the martyrdom of Guru Arjun. He was the author of "Sukhmani." And he had the poet's optimism. He did not forget that life had its shadows. Yet he believed that the world was wonderful. In one of his hymns, he says:—

The Earth is beautiful  
And it has thorny garden.

There comes a time when he is called upon to enter a "thorny garden" in this beautiful Earth ; he is called upon to suffer ; and he suffers with a beautiful optimism in his heart. He is charged by Government with having compiled a "blasphemous book," the Granth Sahib! He is ordered to pay a fine of two lakhs of rupees and to omit some hymns from the book. He will not cancel hymns from a book meant essentially to be a scripture of synthesis. To the Government of his day he says :—" My money is for the poor and friendless. Take what you will ; but if you ask for it as a fine I shall not give a pie. For a fine is for something wrong. As for the hymns, I cannot cancel or alter an iota. There is no king save God. My one object is to spread

the Truth, and if in following the Truth, this body perish, I should deem it a privilege. The Guru becomes a prisoner ; his body is chained ; they torture him ; they ask him to recant ; he says he does not fear, for his suffering is according to the will of God ; he sings hymns as they continue to torture him. For five days they torture him. He sends a message to his son asking him not to mourn the Guru's death or "indulge in unmanly lamentation" but to "sing God's praises." Then as the end is drawing nigh, he asks a minstrel to come with a two-stringed instrument and sing to him the songs he has loved. So passes away this poet-martyr, a witness to the religion of sacrifice. How heroically Guru Tegh Bahadur met his death at the hands of Government is well-known to students of history. And the stories of the sufferings of Guru Gobind Singh, his sons and followers, are, to my mind, one of the richest treasures of world-history. When the Guru's sons fall on the battlefield, the Guru does not "indulge in lamentation." He rather exclaims : "Glory to Thee. Divine Father : that my son has been accepted a sacrifice for Thy truth and religion." All his sons, four in number, die as witnesses to truth and religion. The Guru's wife meets him and asks where and how her sons are ; the Guru says to her : "I have lost them all, but gained for thee the whole of the Khalsa race!" Henceforth all Sikhs were to be her sons. Is it a wonder that the example of the Gurus inspired the disciples too ? In what beautiful spirit did Bhai Mani Singh accept the suffering inflicted on him

by Government ? He was asked to renounce his faith or suffer disjoinment of his body. He stood firm in his faith ; and with his dying breath continued to praise God and recite the " Japji " of Guru Nanak and the " Sukhmani " of Guru Arjun. In a French war novel, *Lex Croix Bois*, we read of a French soldier discharged from hospital and the army. Talking to a friend, he expresses his joy at the victory won by France. Asked why he thinks it a victory he says : " A Victory, because I came out of it living." The Sikh spirit was different. To the Sikh, victory was in the moment of his death. In sacrifice was his victory. In the period of the great persecution the custom of the Sikhs was to embrace one another, to offer the prayer (ardas) and then go out to meet the challenge of Death. Not alone the grown up men but boys and girls of tender years poured out their lives as offering to the ideal—so vital become the Guru's religion of sacrifice. Recall the tragic story of that boy-martyr, the brother of Ajit Singh, feeling thirsty and asked for water but receiving from his father, the Guru, the reply : " Go forth, my boy : go thou as a witness to the faith. The Angels of the Lord hold for you the cup of *amrita* (water of immortality) Go forth and receive it in the company of thy brother. Or recall that tender story of chandu's daughter-in-law, a Sikh girl, going in the dead of the night to the Guru's prison and offering him food and *sherbat*, and, later, giving up her own body on hearing of the Guru's death. Nietzsche must have thought of some perversions of religion when he said that " religion

was the immortal blemish of mankind." The religion of the Gurus, the religion of sacrifice, is an immortal, glory of humanity.

Am I wrong in thinking that it has a message for the modern age ? Western civilization has moved away from the spiritual ideal. It has moved fast to India, challenging in Europe the Christ-ideal, it has challenged in India the banner of the Guru. Is India ready to bear the banner ? Then must young men understand and put in practice the religion of sacrifice. The world I speak or write have behind them the aspiration that they may be of some help, some service, to India's young men. For in Young India is my hope ; in Young India is, I believe, the promise of freedom for an ancient people. Therefore I ask Young India to study the lives of the Sikh Gurus and martyrs. The coming religion is the religion of sacrifice. It is the religion that Young India needs. Let our Nationalism grow into this Religion ; let the *swaraj* movement be sustained by this spirit ; let young men, refusing to be the hangers-on of an 'empire' which tramples upon the sacred rights of an ancient Nation, train themselves in the school of sacrifice ; and we shall have the strength to re-build the shattered temple of freedom in this country. There is a little story told of Guru Nanak. One day he asked his Muslim disciple Mardana to sing a hymn accompanied on his musical instrument. Mardana is holding a horse at the time he is asked to play upon the instrument. He says to the Guru :—"I cannot sing and play the instrument :

I hold a horse with the other hand." And the Guru says to him :—"Repeat the Name ; let go the horse." And I, a humble disciple of the Great Ones, would fain say to every young man : "You cannot serve both freedom and ambition. Let go the honours and titles of the passing hour. Repeat the Mother's Name. Sing India and her freedom." "*Let go the horse*"! It may be the will of God that the Struggle of to-day must pass through a stage of yet greater suffering. But a *swarajist*, be he a Sikh or Hindu or Muslim or Christian, can have no nobler creed than the religion of sacrifice. And I know of no better summing up of the Creed than this "Sing India and her freedom, and let go the horse."





## MY MOTHERLAND SERIES

In this Series the author, T. L. Vaswani, will interpret aspects of the Spirit of India as reflected in her culture and civilization and in the lives of the saints and sages and heroes of her history,

The first volume, is named "The Aryan Ideal". The 'Aryan' includes the 'Hindu' and 'Buddhist'. Some of the volumes to follow will include Essays indicating the values of Islam. Islam, the author says, introduced an element of 'romance' in our culture. This, he thinks, is specially true with regard to the culture of his native land—the Sindhi culture—which owes much to Islam and is, essentially, of a 'romantic' type. The author believes that without the deeper values to which Islam is a witness, the scheme of our evolution would be incomplete.

Back of the Series is the aspiration that in the present period of our struggle for freedom, India's young men may be helped, in howsoever humble a measure, to recover *lost memory* of India and the Indian ideal. What is wrong with us in India? Loss of memory. We have forgotten ourselves. The author believes that in the day we remember ourselves,—remember the *real self* of India—we shall have the strength to win Freedom's Battle.

Now ready the first Volume

THE ARYAN IDEAL "

Price Rupee 1.

GANESH & CO. :: Publishers :: Madras





